

SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

OR

THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL

ILLUMINATING ARTICLES
BY
EMINENT MEN ALL OVER INDIA



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Divine Life Society is celebrating for the past so many years the Gita Jayanti in unparalleled scale under the kind patronage of many votaries of Gita. Gita is the scripture of the day; not for India alone but for the whole world. Nationalists, Politicians, Communists find their data only in Gita. Gita is a book for the Emperor and a layman too. It is the only practical guide which solves any problem in life. In the recent World war, there was incessant cry for copies of Gita.

Gita Jayanti is the day on which Wisdom was imparted to Arjuna by Lord Krishna. Persons thrust deep in the quagmire of Samsara find revelation in Gita by studious parayan, analysis and practical application.

The Society is conducting every year elocution contest amongst young-folk and distributes prizes. Gita havan and Akhanda Gita pat are conducted for the whole of the day. An essay competition is held and zealous entrants are suitably encouraged.

Lord Krishna's blessings are ever upon those who have responded to the call in contributing articles to this volume, those who have helped in collecting elevating essays and inspiring messages and the Allahabad Block Works who have successfully brought this book with a neat get-up and placed in the hands of the readers.

The Publishers.

35 1st January 1946

Friends,

Gita embodies in itself a solution to the immediately pressing problems of man and carries a wonderful message of encouragement, hope, cheer and consolation. It is a direct appeal to divinise the entire nature of man.

This little book of 700 verses is a constant companion for every man. It finds a place in the pocket of every man.

It gives man a positive promise of salvation and makes him fearless. Therein lies the supreme value of Gita.

Sivananda

INTRODUCTION.

Etymologically, Yoga means 'unity', 'joining'. As a means of attaining the Supreme, Yoga is deep and abstract meditation, concentration of the mind, contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. It is defined in Yoga Philosophy as *Chitta Vritti Nirodha*, or, 'control of the operation of *Chitta*'. *Chitta* is the sub-conscious mind, the repository of impulses, the storehouse of impressions, the seat of Memory. It is distinguished from the *Manas* and the *Buddhi* both of whom are the conscious mind. The latter cannot be effectively restrained unless the former is. Yoga is, therefore, the process by which the control is effected. In this sense, too, Yoga means 'uniting' or 'joining', for the mind is, in the process, united with the Atman dwelling in the body.

In the Bhagavad-Gita, each Chapter is given a title, which describes it as a Yoga. Even the first chapter is titled, 'the Yoga of Arjuna's grief.' 'Grief' cannot, by any means, be regarded as a method of controlling the mind. It would, therefore, appear that 'Yoga' in this

context means only a 'division' or 'part' of the entire book. But there is no such meaning for the word. Hence, we have to interpret the word differently. Here, too, there is the idea of 'uniting'. Arjuna is now 'united' to or affected by despondency. His discrimination is lost and he is weaned away from his usual and normal condition of allegiance to Dharma. To relieve him of his distress and to lead him to the right path, Yoga has to be resorted to. The Yoga teaching of the Gita has to be begun even when Arjuna is 'united' to grief. He must be made to reverse his steps and cut off his 'union' with grief, his association with *Asat* and must be led to the *Sat* i. e., from the unreal to the Real. Though association with *Asat* is not Yoga, the reversal of the attachment and the linking of Arjuna's mind with the real is Yoga. That, in fact, is the first step in the path of spiritual advancement. That is why the Upanishadic prayer also begins with the appeal, "*Asato ma Sat gamaya*" i.e., 'Lead me from the unreal to the Real.'

In chapter II, instruction in Yoga really begins. The one aim of all Yogic teaching is to show how the human soul may become completely united with the supreme spirit and may thus secure absolution. First, the intellect or Buddhi must perceive what is true and what is false. This can be done only by minute analysis and clear reasoning. The fundamental differences between one thing and another must be noted before one can find out what is to be discarded as useless and what is to be preserved as valuable. The perishable nature of the body and the imperishable nature of the dweller therein are therefore explained by Lord Sri Krishna, and Arjuna is made to understand, by the exercise of his Buddhi, or intellectual faculties, the truth about the Atman. The method adopted is analytical. The separate aspects of the body as childhood, youth and old age, the notions of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure, are all analysed and discovered to have an end, and therefore to be impermanent in their nature. The Dweller in the body is, on the other hand, discovered to

be never born, never dead, never a slayer, never slain, to be incapable of being burnt, wetted or dried, to be even unthinkable and marvellous and wonderful. When Arjuna's Buddhi is thus made to analyse the attributes of both the self and the body, he perceived the Truth through his reason. Thus opens the chapter in Sankhya Yoga.

The word '*Sankhya*' as an adjective means, 'discriminative', 'deliberating', 'reasoning'. As a noun, it means, 'a reasoner'. In deliberating or reasoning about the attributes, Arjuna's Buddhi was in *Sankhya*. That is what Sri Krishna says, "This that has been declared is through discriminative reasoning with the aid of Buddhi. Now listen to what is to be known through Yoga." Chapt. II—Sl. 39). This is the first occasion when the word Yoga is used in the text of the Bhagavad Gita. Lord Krishna implies that henceforth Arjuna should not be satisfied with mere abstract and theoretical ratiocination but must begin the practical application of the teaching. The result achieved thereby is the

abandonment of attachment, remaining unconcerned about success or failure and with evenness of mind. Seeking refuge in evenness, one frees oneself even in this life, from vice and virtue. Therefore Yoga is the practical means to be employed for achieving spiritual progress. The method consists in doing work without attachment and with even-ness of mind. (Ch. II 48—50)

Examining the advice given above, in the name of Yoga, we find that (1) actions are performed, (2) attachment to them is abandoned, (3) the actor is unconcerned about success or failure, (4) the mind does not oscillate, (5) the actor is not affected by vice or virtue prevailing in life. To make the position clear, let us take up all these for close scrutiny.

Every act is done through the agency of the mind. It is in contact with the senses (*Indriyas*) and the senses are in contact with the *Vishaya* or objects of the world. Normally the mind must be attached. But when Yoga is practised i. e., when the theoretical teaching of the ultimate Truth is actually put into

practice, the Buddhi is under the guidance of the *Jiva* and the *Jiva* is linked up with the *Atman*. The Buddhi is also illumined by the supreme wisdom of the *Atman* and is unclouded in its perception of the reality. It realises that the actions that are performed are all done through the agency of the *Kriya Sakti* of the Divine Maya of the Supreme Brahman. The pain and pleasure experienced by the mind are experienced only because of the Three Gunas, *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*, not well balanced. The Buddhi orders the mind to keep its balance, to make the *Sattva* sub-ordinate the other two and when the mind carries out this order, even-ness is obtained. The *Jiva* becomes illumined by the Effulgence of the Atmic Consciousness and remains as the witness of the Drama of Life. It becomes unconcerned about success or failure. It allows the *Kriya-sakti* to operate through the Gunas and Indriyas and enjoys the whole fun (as the *Bhokta*). Therefore, there is no attachment, no concern about the experienced re-

sults, whether they are in the form of pleasure or pain, no oscillation of the mind, no influence of virtue or vice. The equanimity thus attained is called the "well-established discrimination" (*Sthita-prajna*). The Jiva finds satisfaction in the Self alone.

To reach that stage of "well-established discrimination", Sankhya Yoga is the means suggested in the Second Chapter. By analysis the Buddhi perceives the perishability of the body and withdraws itself therefrom; by synthesis, it perceives first that the *Vishayas*, *Indriyas* and *Gunas* are actively co-operating with one another under the guidance of *Avidya* (or *Maya* in relation to the Jiva) and to become free from bondage, the Buddhi must *unite* with the Jiva, and the Jiva must also *separate* itself from the temporal enjoyments of the world and *unite* itself with the Atman. In other words, the Buddhi must be in *Yoga* with the Atman. This is an active synthesising process. It is called the *Nivritti Marga* whereby the Jiva is led from the unreal to the Real, from the darkness to Light

and from mortality to Immortality. It is San-
khya Yoga which gives the lead.

In Chapter III, entitled Karma Yoga, the steps to be taken by the aspirant are elaborated. The *Jnanendriyas* are to be *restrained* by the mind and the *Karmendriyas* are *directed* to the path of work (sl. 7). Work is not to be abandoned, but done without attachment. In fact, work cannot be abandoned absolutely for man would perish if he did not do such work as eating, drinking, etc. On the other hand, doing work without attachment is the positive practice of Yoga. It is the same Yoga that we noticed before, but it is practised through the agency of actions and is therefore called Karma Yoga.

In Chapter IV, Yoga puts on a different appearance and is called Jnana-karma-sannyasa Yoga. The active process here consists in renouncing action in the knowledge of the Truth. We have to do actoin as in the case of Karma Yoga without attachment or expectation of results, but have to go one step further, *i. e.* we must *know*

that we are not doing any action even while we are acting. This Knowledge is the Highest Truth, which makes us aware that we are the Supreme Self, that it is the Gunas that act when we are supposed to be acting. Furthermore, when we as the Supreme Self are not acting, we are actually acting through our union with Maya. The Maya itself is a projection of *Paramatman*. When we as the *Jivatman* identify ourselves with the *Paramatman*, we are also identifying ourselves with the Maya of the *Paramatman*, though we know it only to be a projection. Therefore we identify ourselves in that way with all the work that is done by the Maya. That is why we are the doers of all action. This is the meaning of the 18th Sloka, which says, "He who sees in-action in action and action in inaction, he is intelligent among men, he is a yogi and a doer of all action." The Sloka also clearly states that Yoga is the means through which we realise all this. This Yoga properly comprehended means *union* first of the *Jivatman* with the *Paramatman*, and consequently with

Maya (the projection of *Paramatman*) whereby the *Jivatman* becomes united with all action done by Maya, *i. e.*, becomes the doer of all action. Here one's Karma is renounced in Knowledge and that is why the chapter is called *Jnana karma-sannyasa-yoga*.

Chapter V, dealing with *Karma-sannyasa* Yoga describes the state of the Yogi, when he renounces action in his union with the Brahman. Such a person finds happiness within himself, has rest within, sees light within, becomes Brahman and attains absolute freedom (ch. V/24). One who does not reach that state has no right to give up action. Such a Karma Sannyasin is an introvert. He is established in his identity with Brahman. Here too it is the same Yoga that we have been examining hitherto as the positive process of uniting the Jiva with Brahman.

Chapter VI, gives the teaching about Dhyana Yoga, also called '*Atma-samyama-yoga*', The aspirant is advised to constantly practise concentration of the mind, retiring into solitude

with mind and body subdued and free from hope and sense of possession. Certain external practices are also prescribed for him. Yoga here consists in *uniting* the completely controlled mind with the Self alone and in continuing the practice till the aspirant sees the Self within his own self, is satisfied with It, and attains Infinite Bliss. The state of meditation which takes him beyond the reach of sorrows is called definitely the state of Yoga (ch. VI/23). By remaining in that state, he becomes Brahman. With the eye of even-ness, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self (Sl. 29).

From the foregoing explanations of the term Yoga, it will have become clear that there is only one Yoga, though it gets different names according to the objects for which it is practised. The essential feature of Yoga is the ultimate identification of the *Jivatman* with the *Paramatman*, so as to be released from the cycle of birth and death. This one and only Yoga synthesises all apparently differing paths.

Often we come across such terms as Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. The consummation reached in these apparently different Yogas is reached in the same way and the evidence of such consummation is bound to be the same. The perfect Bhakta, the perfect Jnani and the perfect Karma Yogin will each reveal in himself the same characteristic marks of perfect peace, balance, harmony, absolute fearlessness and freedom. All pass through the same Yoga Sadhana from disharmony to perfect harmony *Nirdosham Samam*..... Chapter V/15) from multiplicity and variety to unity and oneness (*Ekatvam* Chapt. VI/31) and from a state of disturbed agitation to a state of perfect peace (*Santam Nirvana paramam*..... Chapt. VI/15). The *Margas* or paths may differ according to the differences in mental development but they are all synthesised by the same Yoga, taught by the Gita, which may be called the Yoga of synthesis. It is the same Yoga, which leads one to the Supreme state (*Paramam Padam*.)

The Gita goes still further. Just as the individual Jiva attains through Yoga the state of Brahman and in his state of complete identification is an embodiment of the Yoga which he has practised, Sri Krishna, the *Paramatman* is also explained by the Bhagavad Gita as the visible manifestation of Yoga. He is called *Yogeshwara*, which not only means that He is that Lord of Yoga but also means 'Yoga in Divine Manifestation,' When He gave Arjuna the divine vision, He asked Him to see His Yoga Power Supreme (*Yogam Aiswaryam*.....Ch. XI./8) The Viswaroopa or the Universal form was the Divine Yoga in manifestation, as a form to be seen by super-sensuous sight. It was in that Viswaroopa that the full meaning of Yoga as union was revealed, for there was nothing in the universe (including such intangible things as Time) that was not found united in the Form. Apart from this special manifestation, Sri Krishna was always manifesting in Himself the Yoga, which he taught. Throughout the Gita, the teaching is personal, e. g., "Freed from attachment, fear and

anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, may have attained My Being." (Ch. IV/19). There are many more such references. In all these, Sri Krishna was revealing His Oneness with the *Paramatman*. In other words, His physical form was ever in Yogic Union with the *Paramatman*. There is no other way of expressing the truth of the matter than by saying that *He is Yoga in manifestation*.

In the last chapter, Sanjaya says, "I heard this supreme and most secret Yoga direct from Krishna—the Yogeshwara Himself declaring it." (Chapt. XVIII 75). Here, we find that the whole teaching of the Gita is described as Yoga. Sri Krishna says the same thing in Chapter IV. "I gave this imperishable Yoga to Vaivaswata &c". It is clear from these references that Krishna and Sanjaya understood the Gita to be the exposition of only one Yoga.

In the light of such a definite statement, it would be wrong to hold the view that the Gita speaks of different kinds of Yoga, each one differ-

ent from the rest. We should never forget that the Gita teaches us only One Yoga and that it is the YOGA OF SYNTHESIS, whether the aspirant is by temperament a Bhakta, Jnani or Karma Marghin.

Swami Sadananda

GITA MAHATMYA

The Glory of Gita

श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगोपालकृष्णाय नमः ॥

Prostrations to Sri Ganesha ! Prostrations
to the Lover of Radha !!

धरोवाच

भगवन् परमंशान् भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।

प्रारब्धं भुज्यमानस्य कथं भवति हे प्रभो ॥१॥

Dhara (the Earth) said :—

1. O Bhagavan ! the Supreme Ishwara !

How can unflinching devotion arise in him who
is immersed in his Prarabdha Karmas (worldy
life), O Lord.

श्री विष्णुरुवाच

प्रारब्धं भुज्यमानो हि गीताभ्यासरतः सदा ।

स मुक्तः स सुखी लोके कर्मणा नोपलिप्यते ॥२॥

Lord Vishnu said :—

2. Though engaged in worldly activities
(Prarabdha Karmas) one who is regular in the
study of Gita, becomes free. He is not bound
by Karma. He is the happy man in this world.

महापापादिपापानि गीताध्यानं करोति चेत् ।

कचित्स्पर्शं न कुर्वन्ति नलिनीदलमंबुवत् ॥३॥

3. Just as the water stains not the lotus leaf, even, so, sins do not taint him who is regular in the recitation of Gita.

गीतायाः पुस्तकं यत्र यत्र पाठः प्रवर्तते ।

तत्र सर्वाणि तीर्थानि प्रयागादीनि तत्र वै ॥४॥

4. All the sacred places of pilgrimage like Prayag, etc., dwell in that place where the book Gita is kept and where Gita is read.

सर्वे देवाश्च ऋषयो योगिनः पन्नागाश्च ये ।

गोपाला गोपिका वापि नारदोद्धवपार्षदैः ॥५॥

5. All Devas, Rishis, Yogins, Pannagas (divine serpents), Gopalas, Gopikas (friends and devotees of Lord Krishna), Narada, (Uddhava and others (dwell there).

सहायो जायते शीघ्रं यत्र गीता प्रवर्तते ।

यत्र गीताविचारश्च पठनं पाठनं श्रुतम्

तत्राहं निश्चितं पृथिवि निवसामि सदैव हि ॥६॥

6. Help comes quickly where Gita is recited and, O Earth, I dwell at all times where Gita is read, heard, taught and contemplated upon.

गीताश्रयेऽहं तिष्ठामि गीता मे चोत्तमं गृहम् ।

गीताज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य त्रीलोकान्पालयाम्यहम् ॥७॥

7. I take refuge in Gita and Gita is my

best abode. I protect the three worlds with the knowledge of Gita.

गीता मे परमा विद्या ब्रह्मरूपा न संशयः ।

अधमात्राक्षरा नित्या स्वानिर्वाच्यपदात्मिका ॥८॥

8. Gita is My highest science, which is doubtless of the form of Brahman, the Eternal, the Ardhamatra (of the Pranava OM) the ineffable splendour of the Self.

त्रिदानंदेन कृष्णेन प्रोक्ता स्वमुखतोऽर्जुनम् ।

वेदत्रयी परानन्दा तत्त्वाथज्ञानसंयुता ॥९॥

9. It was spoken by the Blessed Krishna, the all-knowing, through His own mouth to Arjuna. It contains the essence of the three Vedas, the knowledge of the Reality. It is full of supreme bliss.

योऽष्टादशजपेन्नित्यं नरो निश्चलमानसः ।

ज्ञानसिद्धिं स लभते ततो याति परं पदम् ॥१०॥

10. He who recites the eighteen chapters of the Gita daily with a pure, unshaken mind, attains perfection in knowledge and reaches the highest state or supreme goal.

पाठेऽसमर्थः संपूर्णं ततोऽर्धं पाठमाचरेत् ।

तदा शान्तानजं पुण्यं लभते नात्र संशयः ॥११॥

11. If a complete reading is not possible even if half of it is read, he attains the benefit of giving a cow as a gift. There is no doubt about this.

त्रिभागं पठमानस्तु गंगास्तानफलं लभेत् ।

षडंशं जपमानस्तु सोमयागफलं लभेत् ॥१२॥

12. He who recites one-third part of it achieves the merit of a bath in the sacred Ganges, and he who recites one-sixth part of it attains the merit of performing a Soma Yaga or sacrifice.

एकाध्यायं तु यो नित्यं पठते भक्तिसंयुतः ।

रुद्रलोकमवाप्नोति गणोभूत्वा वसेच्चिरम् ॥१३॥

13. That person who reads one chapter with great devotion attains to the world of Rudra (Rudra Loka) and having become a Gana lives there for many years.

अध्यायं श्लोकपादं वा नित्यं यः पठते नर ।

स याति नरतां यावन्मन्वंतरं वसुन्धरे ॥१४॥

14. If one reads a chapter or even a part of a verse daily, he, O Earth, retains a human body till the end of a Manvantara (71 Mahayugas or 308, 443,000 years).

गीतायाः श्लोकदशकं सप्त पञ्च चतुष्टयम् ।

द्वौ त्रीनेकं तदर्धं वा लोकानां यः पठेन्नरः ॥

चन्द्रलोकमवाप्नोति वर्षाणामयुतं ध्रुवम् ।

गीतापाठसमायुक्तो मृतो मानुषतां व्रजेत् ॥१५, १६॥

15. & 16. He who repeats even ten, seven, five, four, three, two Slokas or even one or half of it attains the Chandraloka and lives there for 10,000 years. Accustomed for the daily study of Gita the dying man comes back to life.

गीताभ्यासं पुनः कृत्वा लभते मुक्तिमुत्तमाम् ।

गीतेत्युच्चारसंयुक्तो म्रियमाणो गतिं लभेत् ॥१७॥

17. By repeated study of Gita he attains Mukti. Uttering "Gita" at the time of death one attains liberation.

गीतार्थश्रवणासक्तो महापापयुतोऽपि वा ।

वैकुण्ठं समवाप्नोति विष्णुना सह मोदते ॥१८॥

18. Though full of sins, one, who is ever intent on hearing the meaning of Gita, goes to Vaikunta and rejoices with Lord Vishnu.

गीतार्थं ध्यायते नित्यं कृत्वा कर्माणि भूरिशः ।

जीवन्मुक्तः स विज्ञेयो देहान्ते परमं पदम् ॥१९॥

19. He who meditates on the meaning of

Gita having performed lot of good actions, attains the supreme goal after death. Such a man should be known as Jivanmukta (liberated while living).

गीतामाश्रित्य बहवो भूभुजो जनकादयः ।

निधूर्तकल्मषा लोके गीता याताः परं पदम् ॥२०॥

20. In this world taking refuge in Gita, many kings like Janaka and others have reached the highest state or goal, purified of all sins.

गीतायाः पठनं कृत्वा माहात्म्यं नैव यः पठेत् ।

वृथा पाठो भवेत्तस्य श्रम एव ह्युदाहृतः ॥२१॥

21. He who fails to read the greatness of Gita having read the Gita, loses the benefit thereby and effort alone remains.

एतन्माहात्म्यसंयुक्तं गीताभ्यासं करोति यः ।

स तत्फलमवाप्नोति दुर्लभां गतिं माप्नुयात् २२॥

22. One who studies Gita together with this glory of Gita (Mahatmyam) attains that fruit mentioned and reaches the state very difficult to be attained.

सूत उवाच

माहात्म्यमेतद्गीतायाः मया प्रोक्तं सनातनम्

गीतांते च पठेद्यस्तु यदुक्तं तत्फलं लभेत् ॥२३॥

इति श्रीवारहपुराणे श्रीगीतामाहात्म्यं संपूर्णम् ।

Suta said :—

23. This greatness or glory of Gita which is eternal as narrated by me, should be read at the end of the study of Gita and the fruits mentioned therein are obtained.

Thus ends the glory of Gita
contained in the Varaha Purana.

Om Santi ! Santi !! Santi !!

The Universal Gospel.

(By Sri Swami Sivananda, Ananda Kutir, Rikhikesh)

Nearly six thousand years ago, on the 11th day of the bright half of Marga Sirsha month, a dazzling flash of brilliant lightning lit up the firmament of human civilization. This spiritual effulgence, the flash is the message of Gita given by the Lord Himself to His beloved disciple Arjuna at Kuruk hetra. Unlike ordinary lightning which dies away immediately after flashing in the split of a second, this brilliant flash of that memorable day continued to shine through the centuries and even now it illuminates the path of humanity on its onward march to Perfection.

The greatest gift, the best blessing that India has conferred upon the world, upon all humanity is the sublime yet eminently practical Universal gospel of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. The greatest thinkers and philosophers of the occident have vied with one another in paying their devout tribute at the shrine of the Gita.

Holding a unique position in the sacred literature of the world standing unrivalled through the ages as a practical gospel of Divine living, recognized on all sides as a Universal scripture par excellence, the Gita has to day come to be the strength and solace, the constant companion and comforter, the guide, friend and philosopher of a vast section.

The secret of its universal appeal and acceptance lies in the fact that the Gita does not exclude any being from receiving its message and becoming blessed. It is entirely unsectarian and is preeminently a practical gospel. It is meant for you, for me and for every man and woman living their ordinary life in the busy everyday world. It has a workable message and method of attaining Bliss and perfection to suit every kind of temperament containing as it does the exposition of Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga.

The Gita is a gospel for the whole world. It is meant for the generality of mankind. None but the Lord can bring out such an unprecedented-

ed and marvellous book which gives peace to the readers, which helps and guides them in the attainment of Supreme Bliss, which has survived up to this time. This itself proves clearly that God exists, that God is an embodiment of knowledge and that one can attain perfection or liberation by realizing God alone.

Gita is a synthesis of religion and ethics. Gita is the synthesis of all Yogas. Gita is the gist and quintessence of all the Vedas and the scriptures. It is the crest jewel of Mahabharata. Gita is a Brahma Vidya, a Yoga Shastra, an Upanishad, a Samveda, the science of the Self. Wilhelm Von Humboldt, the famous occidental scholar says. "The Bhagavad Gita is the deepest and sublimest production the world possesses." Ask, you shall be given ; seek, you shall find ; knock the door, it will be opened to you. This is the unopposed quality of the scripture. You obtain access at one stroke to the entire range of wisdom, human and divine.

Gita is a universal gospel, which appeals to all irrespective of age, race or religion. It has

a universality which embraces every aspect of human action, which suits and elevates every stage of human development. That is the reason why tributes to Gita have been paid by the eminent scholars of the world.

The Gospel of the Gita is at once a rousing and inspiring gospel that throws a flood of light upon the most vexing problems of life, lights up with bright rays of hope and assurance the dark corners of gloom, despondency and despair, raising the reader at once from weakness to strength from diffidence to robust confidence in his own infinite powers and imperishable nature.

It has the heartening message that, to realize His Divinity, His Immortal Nature, man is not required to become a recluse breaking off from family and friends and holding far from the society. That union with the Divine Self may be achieved and maintained even in the midst of worldly work and activities. The obstacles to this blissful union lies within us and not in external environment. This is the central lesson

of this unique and blessed book.

The essence of Gita is Tyaga. But it does not mean the renunciation of the outer riches. It means the renunciation of ego, lust, greed, anger, jealousy, hatred and such other negative qualities that stand in the way of the ethical perfection and one's own self-evolution. Gita teaches non-attachment to perishable and attachment to the Imperishable. Gita wants you to be selfless and to be engaged in discharging your respective duties (Swadharma), dedicating fruits to the supreme Lord.

Gita gives you practical lessons to regulate your daily life and conduct. Gita tells you to resist adharma, to develop the divine virtues, which will help you to attain God-consciousness and to try to attain self-realization in and through the world. Duty for duty's sake, action without attachment and expectation of fruits, alive of discipline, regular meditation and introspection, self-surrender and sacrifice, practice of non-injury, truthfulness and purity, cultivation of Daivi-sampat and universal love, service of suffer-

ing humanity, enquiry into the nature of the Supreme Self, the Reality behind these names and forms and constant endeavour to identify yourself with the all-pervading Consciousness or the Immortal Soul—these are the lessons of the Gita for individuals and the nations alike.

The bold clarion note of the second chapter hammering into a despairing soul the idea of its essentiality imperishable and indestructible nature forms an eternal inspiring message of courage and hope to all mankind, "Behold", says the Gita to every man, "Behold ; thou art not this perishable physical frame. Thou art Soul, the pure Immortal Spirit, the invulnerable, immutable, perpetual, all-pervading Atman." And subsequently the gospel of Gita proceeds to teach in masterly fashion various methods to arrive at the realization of this glorious Truth.

The message of Gita is the message of sacrifice, love and duty. Love all. Share what you have with others. Do your duties well. Live in the light of the unique teachings of Gita. Rise above petty likes and dislikes. Live in Lord

Krishna, Yogeswara. who is the embodiment of Love. Keep open the portals of your heart by removing selfishness, greed, lust, so that the Supreme Lord Himself may come and dwell therein.

Become like Arjuna, a warrior and kill the enemies within through the arrow of devotion. Lead the Divine Life while remaining in the world. Study constantly Gita. Let the teachings enter your whole being. Your whole attitude towards life will be gradually changed. You will become a God-man. You will not be perturbed by the pairs of opposites. You will attain everlasting peace, immortality and eternal bliss.

Develop the divine attributes that are mentioned in thirteenth and sixteenth chapters of Gita. Practise the three kinds of Tapas prescribed in the seventeenth chapter. Surrender the fruits of your actions to the Lord. Give up the idea, "I am doer". Think of the Lord at all times, and fight, *i. e.*, discharge your Varnashrama duties well. With the mind not wandering after anything else, harmonised by constant practice,

constantly meditating, you will attain the Supreme. This is the message of Gita.

Love is knowledge in diffused expression. Knowledge is love in concentrated essence. Service is love expressed through action. Love, knowledge and service are equally necessary in the complete setting up of Divine Life. Heart, head and hand must be harmoniously developed. Then only you will attain perfection. Gita prescribes methods to develop the heart, head and hand. The thirteenth chapter treats of sadhana that is best calculated to develop the heart. The third chapter deals with the methods to purify the heart through selfless service. The eighteenth chapter shows the way to attain knowledge.

Live in the spirit of the teaching of Gita. Mere talk and lecture will not help you in any way. You may know the whole of Gita by heart. You may deliver lectures on Gita for hours together and yet you may not have a ray of the wisdom of Gita. What is wanted is solid sadhana with mental non attachment and regular

practice—of the teachings of Gita. Become intensely practical, Remember always the seven slokas of the Gita. (The sapta sloki Gita). They are verse 13 of chapter viii, verse 36 of chapter xi, verse 14 of chapter xiii, verse 9 of chapter viii, verse 1 of chapter xv, verse 15 of chapter xv and verse 34 of chapter ix. Also remember the Ekasloki Gita (verse 78 of chapter xviii).

To live means to fight, for all life is a battle whose battlefield is each person's heart wherein the force of good and evil, the Divine and the demonical, purity and passion are ceaselessly at war. The Gita symbolises the solution of the external struggle between the spiritual and material in every human being. Life is activity and none can escape either from action or reign of duty. Therefore wherever you may be, you have to somehow attain your goal in and through activity. Seek to secure a victory of peace and true surrender in the midst of activity rather than craving for a state of external renunciation of activity. This becomes possible only when you establish yourself in the Truth that you

are merely an instrument in the hands of the Divine in dwelling in you. Unattached work, without the idea of agency and without desiring for the fruits of action becomes Yogic activity. Then all your acts are divinised and works cease to bind you any longer.

To efface the ego and achieve non-attachment strive to rise above this body-idea; do not be swayed by desire and aversion; remain unaffected by little pleasure and pain, hope and disappointment.

Cease to swing between extremes of the pairs of opposites. Be balanced in everything. Follow the golden mean. These are the golden precepts of Gita.

Lead the Divine Life. Let the Gita be your constant companion of life. Root out the three evils of lust, greed and anger. These are the very triple gates to darkness. Come out victorious over the pairs of opposites by recognizing their evanescent nature and asserting your Divinity. You will become a God-man with God-vision. You will no more be perturbed by success or failure, pleasure or pain, loss or gain. You will attain courage, strength, peace and bliss in this very life right where you are.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA AND ITS CENTRAL TEACHING.

(Prof. B. L. Atreya, M.A., D. Litt.)

The *Bhagavad Gita*, originally a part of the Bhishma Parva of the great Indian Epic, the *Mahabharata*, now passing as a book by itself, and well-known all over the world, occupies a unique place in the religious literature of the Hindus. It has come to be regarded as one of the three main sources of the spiritual outlook which is the ever-lasting foundation of Hindu culture, the other two being the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasutras*. The rest of the Hindu spiritual lore (leaving aside the *Vedas*—which are the fountainhead) is entirely based on the doctrines embodied in these three great works, rightly called the *Prasthanatraya*—the three landmarks. There is a unique relation believed to be existing among them, which indicates that the central doctrines of the three are the same. The *Upanishads*, which are also called the *Vedantas*, the last portions of the *Vedas*, the earliest in point

of time and the biggest in size (comprising of numerous treatises), are considered to be the fountain-head of spiritual knowledge. The *Brahmasutras*, also called the *Vedanta-sutras* are brief lecture-notes of a scholar and teacher of the *Upanishads*, who tried to express the entire philosophy of the *Upanishads* in a comprehensive, critical and systematic manner and to defend it against other prevalent systems of philosophy. This work claims to add nothing to the teachings of the *Upanishads*; but it is a great and valuable attempt to reconcile and synthesise the apparently conflicting statements about the nature of the individual, the world and God, etc., found at different places in the various *Upanishads*. Being too synoptic and too brief to be understood without a commentary, its statements are of little use to the lay man. The *Bhagavad Gita*, on the other hand, presents a view of life based on the *Upanishads* in a very simple, intelligible and charming manner. It contains in a nutshell, which is not hard to crack nor unpleasant to eat, all the essential doctrines of the *Upanishads*,

and tradition rightly calls it the milk of the cows of the Upanishads. I would rather say that it is the very cream of the spiritual milk of the *Upanishads*.

[Bible of Hindus

If any one book, out of the countless in existence, can rightly be called the Bible of the Hindus, it is decidedly the *Bhagavad Gita*, for it presents in brief the typically Hindu view of life. There is not a single line in this little but mighty work to which any Hindu can have an exception. There is no Hindu who does not regard it as authoritative, and there is no Hindu who does not read it, does not hear it read, or does not aspire to read or hear it. The greatest ambition of every religious Hindu is to live by its teachings, no matter whether he rightly understands them or not. Almost every literate Hindu—from a king to a beggar, from a house-holder to a Sannyasi, from an austere widow to a repentant harlot, from a philosopher to a fool, from a University Vice-Chancellor to a school student—keeps with him or her a copy of

this little store of ancient wisdom. Even the dying Hindu considers it the greatest blessing of the moment if he could read or hear the whole or even a portion of this soothing poem before breathing his last. It is, therefore, no wonder why every religious, social and even political leader or reformer in the ancient, medieval and modern times has used it for the propagation of his creed. The greatest minds of India from Shankar to Gandhi have tried to understand and expound it. There is no other work on which so many commentaries have been written in India, and there is no other book in the world, except the *Holy Bible*, which has been translated in so many languages of the world.

The theme and the style of the *Bhagavad Gita* were enough to make it great and immortal. There is yet another reason which adds to its glory and makes it sacred. Whereas the *Upanishads* are, according to the Hindu tradition, intuitive revelations of the eternal verities of life in the calm and purified minds of the ancient sages, and whereas the *Brahmasutras* are the

synoptic notes of a great scholar and systematizer of the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* is considered to be a more or less *Verbatim* report by the great writer of the *Mahabharat* of the advice and teachings of Sri Krishna—the greatest hero, scholar, statesman, leader and seer of his age, who was, by common consent, regarded as the most perfect and self-conscious manifestation of God in a human form—imparted to his friend Arjuna who happened to suffer from a great mental conflict resulting in neurasthenia on the eve of the Great Indian War. The very name “*Bhagvad Gita*”—the song of the Lord—indicates it.

The God of the *Bhagavad Gita* who imparts wisdom to man in the form of Arjuna is not the god of any particular creed, religion, community or race; nor that of any country or time. He, according to the *Gita* itself, is “the Goal, the Sustainer; the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Benefactor, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Stay, the Ark, and the Seed Imperishable” of the whole world and of all creatures.”

(IX-18). "All creatures come from Him and He pervades all of them." (XVIII-46). The whole of His being is not exhausted in the Universe. He remains intact in Himself and pervades the whole Universe with only a fraction of His Being. (X-42). In the history of the human race, even in sub-human history, there are from time to time special manifestations of this Divinity in the form of sub-human and human beings to set the onward march of spiritual evolution aright, to subdue the force of evil and to strengthen the forces of good (IV. 7-8). Good and evil have no reference in the Bhagavad Gita to the interest of any particular individual, nation, country, race or religion, but to those of "all creatures in the Universe." (V-25).

[Sri Krishna—Paragon of humanity

Such a God of the whole Universe is believed by the Hindus and by the author of the Bhagavad Gita to have manifested, in the greatest degree possible, some time before the great Indian War between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, in the unique and charming

personality of Sri Krishna, the most handsome man, the bravest hero, the cleverest statesman, the wisest teacher and the humblest servant of humanity. He is regarded as the paragon of humanity for all times. Even imagination has not been able to picture a more fully comprehensive, integrated, harmonised, balanced, and well-adjusted personality than of Sri Krishna. Hence He is regarded as the most perfect expression (*Avatara*) of Divinity in the human form. It is he who taught the doctrines embodied in the *Bhagavat Gita*, on the eve of the Mahabharata war, to his great friend Arjuna, who in himself typified man, with his human instincts, emotions and sentiments; with his human intellect which 'looks before and after and pines for what is not'; with all human limitations in wisdom, love and action; with human conflicts and suffering attending them. The place and the situation—the battle-field, with all its horror, hopes and fears—selected are the worst in which human beings can be placed and where they are in the greatest need of light and

wisdom. On a smaller scale we all face conflicts at every step of life. Our minds are the arenas where at every moment we are in a war situation, where one set of ideas fights against the other. We all, therefore, need the light, the wisdom and the advice which Sri Krishna bestowed on Arjuna. Moreover, Sri Krishna, while discussing with Arjuna the main issues of life, went to the very root of the riddle of the universe, and revealed such truths as are of universal application. Hence his teachings embodied in the *Gita*, are of use and value to every man, no matter whether he is on the battle-field, at home, in the office, on the pulpit or at the counter. He can apply them to his immediate problems with a satisfaction of having solved them. They offer him solace not only in life but also at death. It thus seems that God in the form of Sri Krishna spoke to the whole humanity through Arjuna on the main issues of life. That is why a Hindu regards the *Bhagavad Gita* as the most sacred of all his reli-

gious literature after the *Vedas*.

Central teaching 1a

What, then, is the central teaching of this Bible of humanity? This question is both easy and difficult to answer. Easy, because the style of the book is easy, direct and simple. It is free from hair-splitting argumentation. Any man conversant with the Hindu ideology can understand the meaning of almost every line of the *Gita* when he reads it. But, on the other hand, it is difficult, as appears from the fact that no two of the great and many commentators of this small work have yet agreed as to its philosophy. Every student of the *Gita*, after having studied it for some time begins to feel that it has not been properly understood by any of the commentators he has perused. This is mainly due to the work not having been written in a philosophical style. It is a mere dialogue, full of variously apparently conflicting and vague statements. The reader has to make an effort to reconcile and synthesise all such statements in order to build a comprehensive,

systematic and well-integrated philosophical outlook on the basis of it. To understand the *Bhagavad Gita* in this way is as difficult as to understand the life of its teacher, Sri Krishna, who has equally been misunderstood or partially understood by writers on him. The human mind has its psychological limitations to understand, and as a modern psychologist has put it, "we see things not as they are but as we are". So very often, we read our own philosophy in the *Bhagavad Gita* rather than find its own. I, in giving below the central idea of the *Gita*, may not be wholly free from this natural tendency.

To me it appears that the *Bhagavadgita*, as the Bible of humanity is a discourse on the science and art of Deification of man, on the way how a miserable man may realise here and now the status of Divinity. It points out to us the miserable status of man with his limited vision resulting in wrong attitudes, base motives and improper feelings and emotions. It gives us a hope, a better life, here and now, which can not only be free from the sufferings man is heir

to but will be characterised by wisdom, peace and happiness. It tells us the way which leads to this realization of a perfected manhood which is very akin to the Divine Life in which knowledge, joy and peace abide eternally in their fullness. It tells us in graphic detail how the perfected, deified man thinks, feels and behaves: how he lives in relation to God and his fellow-creatures in the world. In short it is a treatise on Yoga or union of the individual with God.

Man, according to the *Bhagavad Gita*, however he might have advanced over animals in knowledge and power, is still at a very low level of the ladder of life. His ignorance about his real and entire nature and about his proper relation with God, nature and fellow-creatures is colossal. His narrow consciousness is enveloped by vast unconsciousness (V. 15), and so he has wrong notions about himself and about his relation to other beings. In reality he is an inseparable part of the One Divine Being, in whom he lives, moves and has his being and yet he knows it not (XV. 7). Wrongly limiting himself to the

physical body, mind and the senses, and consequently identifying himself with them, he feels their origination, decay and destruction as his own, forgetting that he is an immortal, spirit, and thus undergoes the experience of perpetual birth, decay and death and of being tossed up and down, hither and thither, in this vast ocean of an ever-changing world. (VIII, 15, 16, 19; II. 22; IX. 3), Being ignorant of the higher joys of life and therefore desiring the enjoyments of the pleasures of the objects of the senses, he feels attracted towards them, and wishes to possess and enjoy them. Failing to get them immediately, he feels much disturbed in his mind. This disturbance of mind gives rise to delusion, and the latter confuses his memory. Confused memory mars his thinking capacity; and when a man cannot think properly he is doomed to destruction (II. 62-63). Thus on account of the joy and sorrow arising from the desire of some sensual pleasures and from the aversion to others, all individuals are deluded in this world (VII. 27). There is in fact no enjoyment of

sensual pleasures which is free from consequent pain (VI. 23). All such attempts end in frustration. All pleasures terminate in pain, for they have an end as well as a beginning (V. 22). Thus ignorance, transient joy, alternate pleasure and pain, and wrong notions about everything around, are the common lot of all human beings. Yet deep down in the human heart is the undying thirst for perfection, omniscience, omnipotence and everlasting joy and unalloyed happiness, which indicates a possibility of their attainment, although very few people care to attain them (VII. 3). It is for these rare aspirants for perfection that the Lord, who functions in every creature as his innermost self, reveals the profoundest Secret, which liberates them from all ignorance and limitations (IX. 1).

To them he points out that every human life is capable of being transformed into a *Divine Life* here and now. In fact it is the birth-right of every son of man. It is the Ultimate Goal, the Highest Purpose, and the Greatest Value of life. To have attained this divine

consciousness is the greatest *Siddhi* (accomplishment) according to the *Gita*. It is variously termed as 'Contact with the Absolute' (VI-28), 'Presence in the Absolute' (V.20), 'Mergence into the Absolute' (V 26), 'Becoming the Absolute' (V. 24) and Attainment of the Eternal and inexhaustible Status (VIII 56) etc. It is in fact becoming one with and, so, acquiring the nature of the Divinity which shapes the Universe (VIII. 5; XIV. 9). Having acquired that status which may be called in modern terminology 'transfigured' 'deified' or 'enlightened' humanity one attains perfect calmness and balance of mind, which is never disturbed by any happening in life (V. 12, 29; II. 71; IV. 30). One rises above all suffering and pains connected with birth, decay and death, etc. (II. 51; XIV. 20). One experiences a unique kind of Bliss which is absolute, imperishable and unsurpassable (V. 21; VI. 21, 27). One is absolved from all responsibility of actions done by him (III. 13; IV. 14, 16; XVIII. 66). One gets freed from forced rebirths and deaths (VIII. 15) and experi-

ences Immortality (XIV. 20). One has nothing further to attain, for that is the highest status that any being can attain (VIII. 13; III. 17).

How, then, to attain this status of Divinity or enlightened humanity? Commentators of the Bhagavad Gita, imbued with narrow outlooks of their own or of their creeds, have differed from one another as to the method pointed out by the *Gita*. Some have suggested Meditation, some Philosophical Investigation, some Devotion, and others Righteous Acts without any desire for reward. Every one can quote statements from the *Gita* in support of his view, for the Yoga of the *Gita* has as its important aspects all these methods and many more in addition. The *Gita* aims at the training and perfection of not any particular aspect of the human personality but of the total personality. In the art of deification, which is the finest and sublimest of all arts, there is a place for all these practices. No side or aspect of human life has to be atrophied or neglected. The Intuitive Faculty, Reason, Emotions and Will, all have to be perfected side

by side, in order to achieve an all-comprehensive perfection of the personality. The Head, the Heart and the Hand are all needed in an enlightened life, and so they should be trained, refined and perfected. Through the age-long method of concentration, meditation and *Samadhi*, expounded in the so-called *Yoga* treatises, one has to acquire the intuition of the deepest Self; through scientific and philosophical thinking one has to arrive at a clear grasp of the nature of the Reality; through selfless performance of one's social duties one has to free oneself from the binding nature of selfish activities and thus to participate in the Divine Plan with the utmost freedom; and through devotion, love and self-surrender to God, one has to become one with Him. Thus is the cognitive, the affective, the conative and the intuitive nature of man to be trained in accordance with its needs.

The aspirant for perfection, therefore, must have all the knowledge about himself and the Universe that philosophy and science can give. For having come to know the Reality as it is,

he will acquire Cosmic Consciousness and Peace (V. 29 ; IV. 39). He should verify and supplement this knowledge by the mystic intuition of the Reality attained through various occult practices (VI. 25-28). He should always so passionately love the Ideal that nothing but it fills his mind. He should be prepared to sacrifice everything for the ideal. For it is only by unreserved and selfless devotion to God that He is attained. Love makes the lover one with the beloved. Complete and unconditioned surrender to God is the greatest secret to win Him. (VIII. 22, 34, 7, 8. 14 ; XI. 55 ; XII. 8 ; XVIII. 55, 62, 66). He should, in order to free himself from the limiting and binding effects of activity done for selfish ends, act with a sense of duty without any idea of a reward for himself. For our very existence, maintenance and protection countless cosmic and social forces are working. We have to do something in return in order to keep the cosmos and the society functioning properly. What we thus owe to the world and the society for the well-being of all creatures, is our

duty, which consists in the performance of some act appropriate to the occasion. We should not think of escaping from the performance of such acts as our station in life and the situation demand. It is only by selflessly performing such duties with a view to do good to all creatures that we can rightly worship God and work out our perfection and salvation. (XVIII. 46; II. 5; XVIII. 45; V. 12; III. 19, 15). The *Bhagavad Gita* does not approve of the idea of running away from the battle-field of life into a forest to live in an imagined peace. It leaves no choice between fighting or not fighting, between activity or inactivity. The choice lies only between fighting as an enlightened hero in the service of humanity and fighting as a mercenary soldier for selfish gains; between a ceaseless activity of a wise man and the intermittent activity determined by animal needs and urges. It is only by sacrificing his individual interests for the good of all creatures, by working in unison with the Cosmic purpose, and by living in tune with the Infinite, that an individual can break

asunder his little ego and expand into the cosmic Person who guides and controls the world (XVIII. 46). The enlightened person working in tune with the Infinite, does not cease to be aware, to feel or to act. He comes to know as God knows, to feel as God feels, and to work as God works.

In this *Yoga* of the *Bhagavad Gita* there is no choice for a man to be a devotee, a philosopher, a mystic or a man of action. One has to be all these at once. He may start by becoming any one of them in accordance with his predominant nature, but after some time he will realize that advancement on any one of the so-called paths needs a parallel advancement along all others. There cannot be a one-sided expansion of the individual. Perfection in order to be real and lasting should be all-round. This is what we find exemplified in the life of Sri Krishna himself, which in our opinion, is the best commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*. He was a mystic, a philosopher, a man of action and a centre of love and attraction all at once.

PHILOSOPHY OF GITA.

[Prof. Sir S. Radhakrishnan Vice-Chancellor,
Benares Hindu University.]

THE BHAGAVAD GITA is a book which has given solace to millions of our countrymen across the ages; not only to our countrymen but to many people outside also. It is a book which has comforted souls in distress, which has healed the wounds of many people who are seriously afflicted, a book to which testimony has been paid by men of our country and abroad. The great Acharya, Shankara, in his commentary tells us that it is an epitome of all the Shastras. '*Samasta Vedartha Sara Sangraha Bhutam*'—It is the quintessence of all the Vedas and it leads to the realisation of the different ends of life—'*Sakala Purusharta Siddhi*'—it enables you to realise the different ends of life—*Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*. It is not merely our Acharyas who have eulogised it. When Warren Hastings was writing an introduction to the

first English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, he said :

“Writings like this will survive when the British Empire has lost its dominion over India : when the sources of its wealth and prosperity are lost to remembrance, this book and writings like this will survive,”

and he meant to say that it is a book which is neither ancient nor modern, neither eastern nor western, but a human gospel voicing forth the fundamental truths which have worked so to say into the very structure of humanity. It belongs to the very life-blood of the human soul. It does not deal with any sectarian gospel. It does not give you any dogma. It does not insist on the celebration of certain ceremonies or subscription to certain formulae, but it gives you certain root conceptions, certain fundamental ideas which are bound to prevail so long as human nature continues to be what it is. Only the other day in a book published by the Ramakrishna Mission, Aldous Huxley wrote as introduction and he said there.

“Here is a most comprehensive statement of perennial philosophy....If you want a book which will assist humanity in striving for it, its eternal, here is the book, the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution, of enduring value to mankind”.

That is how he put it. You find therefore the book has been appreciated by people of India as well as outside.

In a single discourse it will not be possible for me to dwell at great length on the different aspects of that great gospel. All that I wish to do is to invite your attention to certain fundamental features thereof. You will find in the closing chapter it is said "*Brahma Vidya, Yoga Shashtra, Krishna-Arjuna Samvada*". Take these three words :—(i) *Brahma Vidya* is the metaphysical statement of Reality. It gives you a logical account of what Reality is. (ii) *Yoga Shashtra* indicates to you the pathway to the attainment of that Reality. (iii) *Krishna-Arjuna Samvada*—It is the culmination when the human soul is in communion with the Divine, when the naked individual stands alone before the Alone : Krishna, the Divine and Arjuna, the human soul have communion with each other. Metaphysics, ethics and religion : *Brahma Vidya* is a metaphysical theory of Reality : *Yoga Shashtra* is the ethical pathway to it : *Krishna-Arjuna Samvada*

is the Spiritual Realization or the attainment of the Supreme.

I propose to draw your attention to a few of these aspects. *Brahma Vidya* I said is a metaphysical statement. Well, here in India we never ask the intellect to be suppressed. We never say "Obey and ask no question". The classic on the *Brahma Vidya* is the *Brahma Sutras*. It opens with the Sutra "*Athatho Brahma Jignasa*"—now therefore an enquiry into *Brahman*. *Jignasa*—an investigation, an intellectual enquiry—a logical approach. That is what it tells you. And how do you approach the problem of metaphysics? The second Sutra tells you "*Janmadyasya Yathah*". Is there a Reality from which all these things issue? That second Sutra has reference to the *Bhriguvali* of the *Taittiriya-Upanishad*, where the pupil approaches the teacher and asks him "*Adhihi Bhagavo Brahmeti*". "Teach me. O Master, what is *Brahman*?" And the answer given is "*Tapasa Brahma Vijijnyasasva*". By independent reflection, by your mentalusterity, try to under-

stand what Brahman or the fundamental Reality is. Brahman is that from which all things arise, by which they are maintained, into which they are "*Yato Va Imani Bhutani Jatani Yena Jatani Jivanti Yat Prayantyabhisam Vishanti Tat Brahma*". Try to find out what that ultimate principle is, which is the explanation of all this cosmic evolution. The pupil proceeds step by step. He says :—" May matter be *Brahman-Annam Brahman*. Second, may life be *Brahman-Pranam Brahman*. Third, may animal mind be *Brahman-Mano Brahman*. Fourth may human intellect be *Brahman-Vijnanam Brahma*." He looks at the World. He finds out that there is an order, there is an amazing progression, that things have evolved from unconscious matter or *Anna* to life in the plant world, from the plant world to *Manas* or the animal world, from the animal world to the human mind or the world of *Vijnana*. There has been an upward growth in evolution. It cannot be due to an unholy void. Caprice cannot be the root of things. There is an order; there is a progress

and we go step by step. Such an orderly progressive ascent of the cosmic evolution requires a fundamental principle informing it, animating it, leading it to rise from one stage to another. Therefore the answer is given ' *Anandam Brahma* '. There is a fundamental Reality, Divine Bliss which is operating in all these stages which is the cause of this multiple play of the manifested world. There is one Supreme Reality without which you cannot account for this steady, onward, growth of matter to life, of life to consciousness, of consciousness to human intelligence, of human intelligence to Divine Bliss. This very ascent is an indication of the orderliness of the world, of the progressiveness of the soul, and wherever you have order and progress there must be a mind at work. It cannot be the human mind which is only the product or the outcome. There must therefore be a Divine Principle.

How shall we account for that Divine Principle? What is the name which we shall give to it? Will it be possible for us to give any kind

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of explanation for it? Here we are atoms in an empirical universe bound up in the world of space and time, striving to explore the nature of that unknown principle which stands behind. Is it possible for our finite intellect to fathom that infinite wealth of Reality? The answer is "We cannot". '*Yatho Vacho Nivartante Aprapya Manasa Saha*'.—That from which words turn away along with the mind, baffled; we cannot explain it. The only way in which we can express it, is to say, if this is the empirical world which is lost in space, time and cause, it is something beyond space, time and beyond cause. '*Yat Tat Adreshyam, Agrahyam, Achakshu Shrotram Tad apani Padam*'. We can only say that it is something invisible, intangible; something which eludes words of mouth, categories of logic which stands above them all. They all expose their utter impotence or inadequacy when they try to account for that kind of Supreme Reality. "**Silence** has been the attitude which the greatest of our thinkers have adopted **The austerity of silence is the homage which finite**

mind pays to the infinite riches of that Supreme Reality. Buddha kept silence, Shankara said "Shantoyam Atma." No description can be given of it. They were all bringing out the ineffable character of that Supreme principle—calm, tranquil which is still there, animating the progress of the whole evolution. Is it possible for us to be satisfied with that kind of negative account? No. While on one side it eludes description, we, at the same time know, that it is the fundamental Reality covering this universe. It is the Lord of the Universe. It is the animating principle which is not only *Para Brahma* it is also *Parameshwara—Iswara* as the Lord of the world. We need not put Him as merely the Supreme governor of the Universe. If you are able to fold up your animal ways, if you are able to strip yourself naked, if you are able to have what you call - *Vastra Apaharna*', if you throw away your body, mind, intellect, you come in contact with the conception of Universal awareness without which there can be no body, no mind, no intellectual functioning. All these are

to be regarded as nothing more than the canalisation of that supreme consciousness which is lurking behind these external manifestations of the human soul. In other words, the same Reality is *Para Brahma* when you look upon it as transcending the world. It is *Parameshwara* when you look upon it as the ruler of the world. It is *Paramatma* when you look upon it as the central source of your very being. It is the transcendent, cosmic and individual aspect as the *Bhagavata* puts it. "*Vadanti Tat Tatvavidah Tatvam Yad Jnanam Advayam ; Brahmeti Paramatmeti Bhagavan iti Sabdyate.*" Whether you call it *Brahman*, whether you call it *Paramatman*, whether you call it *Bhagwan*, it makes absolutely no kind of difference. It is merely a standpoint which you are adopting. If the Supreme Lord is to be regarded as the governor of the universe, if He is to be put up as *Saswata Dharma Gopta*, as the Eternal Lord of Righteousness, if this is the function which you attribute to Him, it follows that whenever there is a disturbance in the world, whenever you find a disturbance

in the moral equilibrium of the world, that Supreme Reality which is manifesting Itself in you and the infinite world, will also out of the plenitude of its wealth and compassion show itself in particular historical manifestations. When wickedness and unrighteousness grow, when the strong trample upon the weak—when such a condition arises, to use the words of the poet, “He comes, comes, ever comes.” Sri Sankaracharya says in his introduction to the commentary on Gita :—

“*Sa cha Bhagwan Jnanaishwarya Bala
Virya Tejobhih
Sada Sampanna Trigunatmiham Vaishnavim
Swam Mayam
Mulaprakritim Vashikrtya, Ajo Apyayo
Bhutanam Eshwaro
Nitya Shudda budda Mukta Swabhavo
api sau Swamayaya
Dehavan iva jata lokanugraham kurvan iva
cha lokshyate.*”

On such occasions, he manifests as a historical Individual for the uplift of humanity.

Do not run away with the idea that the Supreme Revelation is a particular unique thing. It is a universal incarnation. It is an incarnation which can be brought about by every individual. A birth of Krishna is described. When *Tamas* predominates, when it is all night, when you do not see a single ray of light, the imprisoned splendour in each individual shines forth. He is there. The *Paramatman* is lurking in the depth of each man's being. But He is wrapped in all these 'Koshas' or sheaths. So long as the individual takes interest in and concentrates his attention on these objective manifestations, that Pure Subject eludes any kind of handling. It is when we are able to stand above all these objectifications that we are able to arrive at what may be called the pure subjectivity. A Jesus had to cry in sheer despair "O God, why hast Thou forsaken me". \ It is a moment when the whole earth seemed to be cracking under His feet. When he sees no hope, when he gives up all his hope, then it is that he takes gleam of light and says "Thy will be done".

Similarly Draupadi in a moment of despair simply cried out, "I have no husband, I have no brothers, I have nobody in this world, even You. O God, '*Naiva Madhusudhana*', even You are dead for me". It is at that moment that she cried that everything else has appeared to her to be utter blank. It is at such a moment when the wrappings fall out, when the scales drop off from our eyes, that we will see Divine Light, active Divine Power.

Similarly when Arjuna was called upon to do his fighting, when he withdrew from it and said "why should I do what is socially commanded, why should I conform to what society expects of me, these social demands, these individual demands, are nothing to me. I am frail, I am incompetent, I am in despair, won't you help me"—It is at such a moment that the Supreme came to the rescue of Arjuna. Whether it is Draupadi or Arjuna or Jesus Christ, it does not matter. So long as the individual is lost in the preoccupations of this world, he centres his hope on them and he is not able to detach himself alto-

ther from these externalisations, from these objectifications, there is no rise of the Lord in him,

The birth of Krishna at the dead of night is merely the birth of Krishna or God in each human soul when the rest of the world become completely a night to us. When it is possible for us to lose faith in them all, and when that external Light seems to be utter darkness, then that inward light will reveal itself. So, this incarnation is not to be regarded as a particular kind of interference with the courses of the world. It is to be regarded as the Universal destiny of man. We are here for the purpose of realising the Divinity which happens to be in us. The metaphysical discussion does not ask you to accept anything on authority. It merely puts before you the nature of the evolution, the necessity for a supreme principle of mind, the principle which governs the universe. If he is a governor of the Universe, He must take interest in the affairs of the world, and each of us can realise the Divinity within us by proceeding through path-

ways appropriate to each.

The second point is Yoga Sastra. It is the ethical pathway. It is the discipline which we have to adopt. It is easy for most of us to get up and say "I believe in God", and every moment do things that deny that belief. There is a difference between the decision of the intellect and the dynamic power of your life. It is essential for you to distinguish between *Asti Brahma* and *Asham Brahma*. It is easy for us to say there is God. It is difficult for us to say I have felt the Divine Reality in the pulse of my being: I have felt it in the blood of my heart; I believe in God even as I believe in this world. Unless we are in a position to say that God as Truth is realised by us, we cannot be supposed to be truly spiritual beings. Metaphysical definition, logical acceptance is quite different from practical realisation. We must be able to realise God in the depths of our consciousness. How can we do it? Here it is that the three methods of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti are placed before us. There are men

who are intellectually inclined, and for them the process is a process of concentration and abstraction from the outward.

When Pythagoras was asked to define what a philosopher's function was, he said "we all go to the feast of life : Some of us make money, others to win name and fame : still others to look on. These lookers-on are the philosophers."

Plato said "Philosophers are the spectators of all time and all space," Time and space are the outward objectives : the spectator is the inward principle of consciousness. Unless it is possible for you to discriminate between the Self or the Atman, and time and space which are the object or the *Anatman*, unless you are able to withdraw the Atma from the *Anatman*, to discriminate between the Pure Self which is the mere looker on and the objective self, more or less engaged in the pursuits of this world it is not possible for you to attain to that pure subjectivity which eludes any kind of objectification. There it is that the method of Dhyana Yoga is prescribed for us. *Nirasi Yata Chitta Atma!*

You must be alone. But physical loneliness is not enough. We can shut ourselves in a room and harbour all kinds of miscellaneous thoughts in our minds. If you want to be your true self, you must be able to control the turbulent desires and the glamour of your passions. That is what it means when the Gita says '*Yata Chitta Atma.*' You must be detached. You must not have any kind of expectation of results or fruits. *Aparigraha*, meaning free from possessiveness the most insidious enemy of any kind of high Life. When Jesus was approached by a man, who said to him "I have observed all the commandments, I have obeyed the laws, what else have I to do to attain the Kingdom of Heaven?", He said, "Go and sell all that thou hast and distribute it to the poor." He never returned to Jesus (Laughter). *Aparigraha* indicates non-possessiveness. You must not have any kind of belongings which attach you to this world. That kind of detachment is absolutely essential. Now Dhyana Yoga is the method by which the mind abstracts from all outward objects not

theoretically but practically without having any kind of interest in the occupations of the world—
'Yata Chitta Atma Nirashi Aparigraha'.

[Bhakti Margas

These are very difficult requirements. And most of us are incapable of them. For us there is the other method, the method of Bhakti, passivity, surrender, acceptance, claiming nothing asking nothing. We place ourselves in the hands of the Divine completely. These are passive virtues, virtues which are regarded as more feminine than masculine. Therefore it is said *Bhagwan Sarvesham Purushah*. There is only one supreme male in this world. All of us are to be regarded as women. *'Striprayam itarat Sarvam'*. In other words, our attitude must be of prayerfulness, must be one of dependence, of complete surrender, passivity, acceptance. Don't claim anything. Ask only for the blessings of the Divine. That is the Bhakti Marga. It is possible for us to adopt this method more easily. The Gopis go about praying to God, appealing to Him to become their husband—*'Katyayani Mahadevi Sarvaloka Maheshwari*

Nanda Gopa Sutam Devi Asmakam Pati....." "I prostrate myself to you, Mahadevi, may the Lord of Gopis, the Son of Nanda be our husband'.

Well, when *Raslila* is talked about, the meaning of it is that there is the Universal Lord petitioned and appealed to and begged for favour by all the individuals of the world. The integrity of that one Supreme spirit is not in any manner affected by the approaches made by millions of individuals. The universality of spirit and the multiplicity of the begging individuals, that is what is attempted to be brought out by what is called *Raslila*. One Supreme Lord faces each individual and because he faces some, it does not follow that he does not face others. Well, that is the idea which is brought out by the conception of the *Raslila* which has been so thoroughly misinterpreted and misconceived by our people also. You will find therefore it is the method of Bhakti, it is the method of devotion; there is still another for those of executive temperament who are not made in a reflective or emotional way. Arjuna himself belongs to that class.

He gets up and says, 'I know I am a Kshatriya. I know it is my duty to fight. But I shall not fight. This is not a thing which I will be able to do. I shall not undertake this fight which has been imposed on me.' And what happens to him?

We all see that when the duty seems to be irksome, when we find we have to carry a share of pain and unpleasantness, we wish to withdraw from the mandate which is imposed on us. We invent all sorts of excuses for the purpose of getting away from what is expected. Ultimately, he is able to enter the truth of things, that is, believes in the spirit which is driving the universe, which is driving him also and he concludes by saying "*Karishye Vachanam Tava*"—I will do as you bid me to do. Similarly, you will find that Jesus Christ raised up his hands and said, "No, I cannot bear all this suffering. Take this cup away from me. This suffering is too much for me. I cannot undertake it." And yet after so much storm and stress he comes to the conclusion '**THY WILL BE DONE**'. Yet not my will but Thy will be done. That is what Jesus

Christ said, exactly a translation of '*Karishye Vachanam Tava*'. Your bidding I will carry out. Both Arjuna and Jesus first of all wanted that the cup of suffering should be taken away from them. Arjuna did not wish to fight and Jesus was unable to drink the cup and said "Take this cup away." "Please excuse me, I shall not fight." says Arjuna. But both of them pass through so much of spiritual evolution that a situation arises when they were able to get up and say, "Yet not my will but Thy will be done". In other words, it is possible for human individuals without any kind of selfish desire of their own to make themselves the instruments of the cosmic powers, to understand that they are here not merely for the satisfaction of their individual preference but for cooperating with the universal purpose by realising that there is a universal purpose. You merely merge yourselves in that purpose and conform to the Divine will and in the process reach your own perfect fulfilment.

So, by acting according to the dictates of the

Divine, It is possible for you to realise the highest possibilities which are already located in you.

Hence it is said that even action, which seems to us to be dirty, seems to us so unpleasant and unpalatable that we would like to avoid and shrink from it, becomes sometimes the end of God, and we may have to undertake it, and, by undertaking it, do the will of God and know His purpose and understand His Reality much more than by the avoidance of action. The *Vishnu Purana* says : "Those people who merely cry out the name of God without doing His will are the enemies of God. '*Svadharmā Karma Vimukhah Krishna Krishneti Vadinah: Te harer deeshno mudhah dharmartham janma yadi hareh*'. Those who are indifferent to their duties in this world but only go about uttering the name of Krishna 'Krishna, they are the enemies of God. They are ignorant, deluded mortals. Even Hari, for the bonds of creation, for the upliftment of the world passed through so many kinds of perils. When he has set an example for us, is it right for us to abstain from the world, from the work

which the world the demands ? Whether it is Dhyana Yoga, Bhakti Marga or Karma Yoga, whichever method you adopt, the Ultimate Reality is that transcendence of the human individual. He is able to get beyond himself ; he is detaching himself from the objective surroundings altogether. He is able to adopt an attitude of a detached spectator when he is undertaking the work in this world. Such an individual is what we call a God-realised soul. Such an individual is one who is face to face with the Supreme. He has touched the garment of Eternity. His mind becomes illumined by the Divine Light. His heart is a flame of love and his whole being thirsts for the uplift of suffering humanity. You will see therefore that the highest purpose which is laid on each individual is not merely to be born, to grow up, to mate, to found a family and leave possessions for posterity and then pass out ; such things are done by even the animals. What the human individual is called upon to do is to realise the Divinity that is there embedded in him.

“There are two things for which there is an alternative choice before each human individual. “*Yasya Chehaya Amritam Yasya Mrityuh*” There are possibilities in each one of us of either *Amrita*, of eternal life, or *mrityu*, of death and ashes. Well, if you want to develop amrita in you. you have to pursue the path of Truth. If on the other hand you want to pass off from death to death, then it is that you are more or less wrapped up in this glamorous world. The highest goal which the Bhagavad Gita puts before us is the goal of practical efficiency combined with philosophic calm. The very last verse of the Bhagavad Gita winds up by saying “*Yatra Yogeshwara Krishno Yatra Partho Dhanurdhara Tatra Sri Vijayo Bhutih Druva Nitir Matirmama*” The words are selected deliberately with a definite purpose. The Yoga, the contemplative energy of Krishna, that by itself is nothing. You require the archery of Arjuna. Not only the philosopher Yogin, but you require the practical man, the King, the philosopher-king of Plato. The Yogin and the Dhyani pouring the energy

of contemplation into the austerity of action, combining the two things, bringing about the marriage of contemplation and action, of Dhyana and Karma, that is the goal which the Gita has prescribed for us. If you just see what the gospel of the Bhagavad Gita is, you will see it has nothing to do with any kind of ill-founded fact or unscientific dogma. It takes human nature as it is. It studies its aspiration for the eternal. It prescribes a way by which that aspiration for the eternal can be realised. It does not want you to surrender your reflective, emotional or practical natures. It merely tells you that man is here on the threshold of a higher life: he has reached intellectuality, but the climb of life indicates that this is not the goal of evolution. He has to proceed further; that further process cannot be in the development of his physique. It can only be in the development of his psyche, and, if it is so, then human intellectuality will have to be converged into illumined consciousness, into inspired understanding; that acquisition of increased awareness, that expansion of your being,

that prolongation of those great moments when human individuals now and then come into touch with the Eternal, when they are, so to say, lifted from this terra firma into uplifting air, when they are carried away into the depths of that being, when time stands still, when they are able to have a glimpse into that fundamental Reality of which immortality and death are merely the shadows. If you are able to realise that destiny, you have realised true fulfilment. But if you have not, you might acquire possessions, you might build material worlds, you might invent atom bombs and devastate people, but you have failed as a human being. When you realise that goal, '*Kulam Pavitram Janani Kritartha Vasundhara Punyavati*', your mother becomes blessed and the place that gave you birth becomes sacred. If it is possible for you to realise even now in this physical frame, that life incorruptible, that life which is the destiny of every human being, then it is that human self has reached its goal.

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RELIGION AND WORSHIP OF THE GITA.

(Hon. Justice S. C. Chakraborty.)

The word religion implies the recognition of supernatural powers and of the duties lying upon man to yield obedience to such powers and the term worship implies fervent adoration paid to such powers. All the world over some sort of religion, ranging from the crudest animism of the savages to the subtlest idealism of the Vedantins of India or of the Hegelians of Europe, is invariably accepted as a racial or national creed. Everywhere religion is found to be a legacy from forefathers or a tradition transmitted through generations. Rituals and formalities are seen to have usurped the entire field and the real essence has totally been lost. Everything appears to be in a state of confusion and free and independent thinking seems to have vanished for ever. Most people do not know the ultimate truth, and some who claim to know it or are credited with having some knowledge about it,

vessels, carnage of atomic bombs would be a thing of the past and would be heard no more, and in their stead we would have witnessed a great federation of the entire planet obeying one universal religion, with one inflexible moral code, which in its natural course would have established such social, economic and political equilibrium as no ambition in human breast could despel or demolish.

Hence the unavailability of religion; and with true religion comes true worship or prayer as the sun brings with him his infinite rays for illuminating the remotest corners of the earth. It need hardly be said that genuine prayer involves the consciousness of the spirit of God in the soul of man and that prayer is always the address of personal spirit to personal spirit. Prayer is not beggary, that is, asking for something and giving nothing. It is, and it should always be, give and take. In order to receive we must give nothing for nothing, little for little, much for much and all for all. One of the best ways in which I have found this idea inimitably

described is to be found in the कीलक स्तवनमयथैव प्रसीदनि" (Kilak) attached Sree Sree Chandi. "दद्यन्ति प्रति गृह्णाति" "Universal Mother is not propitiated unless you give and take. Unless there is giving and taking in prayer, i. e., unless there is response from the Deity to which you offer your prayer, unless and until you feel in the very core of your heart that the primary gift from God at your birth was nothing but a naked body and an animating soul, and that all the other adjuncts to the body are just like outer apparels for clothing it and that they come at the beginning of months and years only to disappear after a limited span of time; and unless also you experience in your prayer that it is the soul alone which counts, and that there is a constant dialogue between your inner soul and the Greater Soul which exists in all shapes and forms which you feel, hear or see and also exists above them all infinitely, your prayer is merely a form and shadow, merely a machine work without a real life in it, and not a mockery of a most despicable type. You may perform your prayer with, "पल्ल",

पुष्पं, फलं, तोयं” (with leaves, flowers, fruits and water), or with, “भाव, भक्ति, श्रद्धा” (inner sensibility, devotion, honesty of purpose and obeisance) or in any other way, as prevails in different countries and amongst different creeds, in different ways, regarding which there need not be any dissension or disagreement, but unless those offerings are made from the soul and not as dull routine work, and are accepted by the Higher Soul which alone can be the real object of your worship and prayer, in the truest sense of the term, you may rest assured that the real purpose of your worship is not fulfilled and that you are simply groping in the dark and well-nigh wasting your time unprofitably. Countless ages may be lost in such wanderings, but the golden ore will remain ever undiscovered.

True religion, therefore, is always an endless passion in the inner self to attain the higher self which has manifested itself in the universe. Such a religion knows no bounds or time, space causality and is above all petty feuds of castes, creeds and nationalities. It is universal and all

embracing.

If the real religion of humanity be this and can never be anything except this, then we have next to consider, what should be our prayer, rather its form, which is meant to be the main theme of this short article inspired at the bidding of the Sadhus of the Divine Life Society living in the recesses of the Himalayas. It is obviously true that "personality is an essential attribute of a prayer-answering God", but the belief on an impersonal deity is not incompatible with a spirit of intense devotion. The idea of God dwelling in transcendental glory and majesty, somewhere above the clouds has become an exploded hypothesis in the present age and in its place the idea of an Omnipresent God within the innermost nature of every human being and also outside has been accepted to be the real truth. The controversies regarding the true nature of God, as to whether he is personal or impersonal are however puerile. A god is not God who is not the embodiment of all the attributes which the human mind is capable of conceiving about Him.

If He is something and not everything, then He is not God—His real nature is realisable and is not expressible by words or gestures nor conceivable by the mind. But for the purposes of prayer, it is essential that the aspirant should know to whom his prayers are to be offered and also how his prayers are to be offered. It is known to all and is also perceived by all in every moment of their lives that the world is in a state of flux—a perpetual change of appearances, a fleeting panorama of name and form.

So these appearances are non-eternal. But no shadow is possible without a substance behind, as an ever-flowing river could not exist without a permanent bed.

नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनाना—

मेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान्,

तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरा—

स्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम् ॥ ५. १३ ॥

“He, the permanent amongst the fleeting, the life among the living, who although one, fulfills the desires of many, those sober ones who perceive Him as existing within their own selves,

to them belongs eternal peace and to none else."

न संदृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य
न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्च नैनम्,
हृदा मनीषा मनसाभिकल्पतो
य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥ ६. ६ ॥

" His form is not visible to the sight. None can see Him with his eyes. He is revealed (unto the initiate) by discrimination and intuition residing in one's heart. Those who know Him, become Immortal."

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा
अस्तीति ब्रूवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥ क ड ६ । १२ ॥

" (That Atman) can never be reached by speech, nor by eyes, nor even by mind. How can it be realised otherwise than from those who say that it exists,"

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवं विधोऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञातुं दृष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥

" O Enemy-terror Arjuna, by unflinching devotion alone, one can see Me as thou hast seen my Viswaroopa and by devotion alone one can know My Real Nature and can also enter into the same."

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान् यश्चास्मि तथ्वतः ।

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥

“ By devotion (alone) man can truly know me—what is my true Nature and what am I. Having thus known Me truly ? he then enters into Me”

ज्ञान पंथ कृपान कै धारा ।

परत खगेश होइ नहि बारा—तुलसीदास

“The wisdom path is like the sharp edge of a sword. It is very hard to tread this path.”

The Brahman or the Absolute has been described in the Vedas as Unknown and Unknowable so long as a man lives, moves and has his being in his fleshy figure of blood and bones. He in reality cannot be limited to any shape. Just as fire, having entered the world, assumes forms according to the configuration of the different objects which it burns, just as one and the same air, assumes forms according to the different objects into which for the time being it is contained, so the Absolute abides in the heart of all beings, Itself being in the least unattached by the conditions of creation,

sustenance and destruction. No deistic or pantheistic idea of God can stand the scrutiny of any rational mind. The light of the Sun makes everything visible, the sun remaining untouched by the defects of the objects on which it shines. So the Brahman (Absolute), making multifarious existence possible, Itself remains unaffected by the finitude and other shortcomings of the created objects. In fact, according to the Vedas it is the Avidya (nescience) which superimposes the phenomena of personality and the world upon the transcendental, just as the phenomenon of snake is superimposed upon a piece of rope seen in darkness. For proper understanding of this proposition, it is necessary that earnest students of religion should make a careful study of the Vivarta Vada of Sri Sankaracharya.

If then the real nature of God be such as propounded above, and if again the realisation of such a God is the aim and object of our life, the question arises how that object can be fulfilled, or in other words, by following what particular course or courses of action that goal can be

attained.

Let us therefore next see what are the possessions of a man, what is his stock-in-trade, and what is his capital and how best he can employ his resources for the realisation of his own self or Atman, which is identical with the Divine in all its characteristics, *i. e.*, existence, knowledge and bliss absolute. Srimad Bhagavad Gita answers all these questions indisputably and also in a manner which is bound to appeal to every rational being to whichever sect, community or nationality he may belong.

The first lesson inculcated by Lord Sri Krishna is about the true nature of the man (vide Chapter II-Sankhya Yoga). The Atman or soul is *Kutastha* and eternal and does not suffer in the least when the body goes to destruction. The body and mind do not work in deep sleep, or in states of trance, ecstasy or Samadhi. Deep sleep is temporary death. But there is bliss behind it which lingers on even in the waking state. Such daily death and daily re-awakening is a matter of common experience with every-

body, although very few of us care to pause and enquire what is the force behind which brings upon us this daily death and what is it that again revives us in the morning. With the disappearance of the body and mind our corporeal existence ceases. We live in the soul which is *Kutastha* marut, Beyond. The body is the outcome of Pancha tan matra i. e., Sthiti, Apa, Teja (earth, water, fire, ether and space), the counterparts of which in the human body, nay in all created objects (as the discovery of atomic protons and electrons has demonstrated) are Muladhar, Swadhishtan, Manipur, Anahata, centres or Chakras on the Shushumna line inside the backbone. Above these centres and in between the eyebrows lies the seat of *Kutastha*, which is eternal and indestructible and often bears like an enigma to common people. But those who are in the right path, under the guidance of any true master, can know it from their personal experience that when the breath is suspended in this centre *Kutastha*, the body is totally lost out of

memory with the concomitant feeling of pleasure and pain, heat and cold, etc., and the aspirant in that state is lifted to a sphere where he exists alone in constant touch with the Eternal Being in a state of such absolute bliss, which no words of mouth and thought of mind can give tangible expression to. In this stage egoism is lost and universality is attained.

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धियस्य न लिप्यते ।

हत्वापि स इमांल्लोकान् न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥

“He who is not obsessed with egotism, whose discriminative faculty is not polluted with the thought of good and evil, such an one even if he destroys all, really destroys nothing, and therefore does not get entangled.”

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कमचोदना ।

करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥

“Knowledge, knowable and knower — these are at the root of all activities; the implements of action, the aim and object of action, and the executor therefore are the resting place of those actions.”

The implements with the assistance of which

we perform our prayers or worship are the ten senses and prana or life-vigour. All activities are to be carried out with the help of these tools or instruments. *Pranayam* (breath-control) and such other actions of the aspirant are real action and the egoistic self is the knower. To be a little more explicit, the conditions of real prayer are that (1) the aspirant must have unambiguous idea of the object of knowledge; (2) he must realise that Atman or soul is the only object of realisation and (3) also that the knower can be nothing else except the embodied soul or Prana—the soul trammelled by the influences of the mind and body. So the aspirant must first realise his true nature, (2) then have recourse to such implements as will lead to his goal and (3) perform such action which lead to Kutastha state (the intelligence sphere of absolute existence). The real Self is the soul or Prana. When we live the life of body and mind (the eleven senses) i.e., when we act under their influence, we lose the soul, the real object of true prayer or worship. When therefore the

aspirant rises above the influence of those eleven senses in soul-state, he acquires true knowledge. The knowledge acquired is surely the knowledge of God or Paramatman. By constant practice of pranayama and particularly a special practice called Yonimudra (which has invariably to be learnt from a Sad-guru), a bright atomic substance becomes visible in the Ajna Chakra (the centre between the two eye-brows). But during earlier stages of such vision, suspicion arises in the mind of the aspirant that any substance which has shape and form (although it is no bigger than the hundredth part of the point of a needle) can never be the eternal and shapeless Brahman which he learnt from his Guru to be the only ultimate object of his worship.

“There is highly illumined space inside the Kutastha; all over that space candle-like lights are seen burning and inside that sphere there is Trikota which is permeated through and through with Brahman. Steadiness in that sphere is the penultimate state of absolute realisation or Samadhi.

There are distinct stages of this realisation, the gradual realisation of which is always a very hard and tremendous task for every earnest and sincere Sadhak (aspirant). Those stages are shortly described as thus : (1) the initial stage is to practise *Pranayama* or intense *Japa* or steadfast meditation; (2) continuous practice, ordinarily for not less than twelve years leads to a state of peace, bereft from the disrupting influences of the body and mind; (3) that leads to a state of deep meditation accompanied by a tie—like pull from the Muladhar (the lowest centre in the Sushumna line inside the backbone) upto the Brahmarandhra (which is located in the centre of the thousand petalled lotus situated inside the cerebrum); (4) then a state is reached when various figures of the deities according to the desires of the Sadhaks become visible in the centre of the blue-coloured *Kutastha*. This stage cannot be attained till the breath becomes totally still from the second centre Swadhisthana upto the sixth centre Ajna Chakra. This is the stage when an aspirant sees God in everything

and everything in God and all the covers of ignorance totally disappear and the aspirant remains in constant touch with the brilliant tiny star, no bigger than the point of a needle in the sixth centre, (5) and the last stage is said to be reached when the blue colour of the *Kutastha* changes into absolute white (which is called *Para-siva*) and all traces of egoism fully disappear and the Atman or Soul is seen to be the only reality or substance in the entire universe.

Some people may consider all these to be cravings of a mad man and others may think that these are too subtle and exacting processes to be capable of attainment by the mind and body. There is however no reason for despondency. Hearken what Lord Krishna said to his favourite disciple in these respects:—

यतः प्रवृत्तिभूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम्
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः

“That from which the desire for action on the part of the creatures arises; that by which the entire universe remains enveloped; man attains salvation by worshipping Him by his own

actions."

What is swakarma? This can be nothing else but what makes man what he is. It is the soul alone which is the true nature of man. Body and its adjuncts are temporary aberrations. So the worship of the Soul or Atma is the only means by which man can attain Salvation.

This is what said about karma. Then the Lord says what is Swadharma.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्

"Essential activities even if defective, are superior to wellperformed non-essential activities. Because by pursuing the natural activities, one does not dive into sin."

It should only be noted here that the word can refer to only such action as is born with birth and which disappears with death. The only thing in the body which fulfills this condition is breath,

In the next Sloka the same thing is described by the Lord as Sahajam Karma. We all fall an easy victim to endless cycles of birth and death

for no other reason than that we do not perform or pursue our Swadharma or Sahajam Karma. For getting rid of these miseries of repeated births and deaths, the Lord advises :—

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्त्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।

गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥

“When man (being awakened to the true nature of his self) looks upon the various activities of the body as nothing but the creation of the *gunas* (essential ingredients of his body), then he goes beyond these ingredients and attains Godhood.”

None can get rid of the influence of the Gunas unless he can rise above his mind and body by seeking shelter in the *Kutastha*, which again opens unto those alone who have acquired control over the breath. So long as there is breath, there is no steadiness.

“So long as there is breathing, there is fickleness of mind; and as soon as the breath is suspended the mind becomes steady.”

For securing this state of breathless life (which really means every breath devoted to

God and none to worldly pursuits) Lord Sri Krishna has laid down various courses for the true and sincere aspirants holding out Arjuna as their solitary symbol. The teachings inculcated in the Gita taken as a whole, not only constitute a Divine song, as many have said, but are perennial dialogues between the embodied soul and the universal. This dialogue is repeated in every pious heart, day in and day out and does not terminate till salvation is reached. So the Lord, after quickening up Arjuna by warnings and admonitions from the depressed conditions of his body and mind (as depicted in the first chapter) holds out before him the real goal of human life and also explains to him in detail how that has to be attained (in the second chapter).

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमाश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।

निर्मेमो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।

स्थित्वा स्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥

“That man, who after relinquishing all (present) desires (for earthly acquisitions), leads

his life, free from desires for unattained objects, free from attachment and free from consciousness of duality, such a man attains peace."

"O Partha, such life is existence in Brahman. Attaining such state, no one suffers from delusion. Furthermore living in this state even at the time of death he gets himself merged in the Brahman".

This Brahmi is set out at the earliest stage of the teachings as without having a distinct view of the goal from the very start no one can have a clean march towards it.

Then follows the various courses for reaching this goal—Karma Yoga, Gyana Yoga, Karma Sannyasa Yoga, Abhayasa Yoga, Vigyana Yoga, Para Brahma Yoga, Rajagughya Yoga, Vibhuti Yoga, Viswarupa Darshana Yoga, Bhakhti Yoga, Prakriti Purusha Yoga, and Purushottama Yoga, and last of all Moksha Yoga, with numerous sidelights for proper understanding and elucidation thereof. Time and space stand in the way of going deep into those various discourses at length in this short essay. To make the long

thing short, it can in one word be said that all those courses although apparently different are essentially the same—

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च संन्यासनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥

“Man cannot attain the state of inactivity without pursuing through a course of action. By (forcible) renunciation of action alone, one cannot attain salvation.”

Thus the Lord propounds that it is through action only that the state of inaction or tranquillity can be attained. Again he says—

श्रद्धावांल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परं शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

“There is nothing so pure as true knowledge; man attains that knowledge within himself after he has obtained success in the practices of Yoga.”

The faithful (in the words of Guru and the teachings of the Scriptures), ever active and the controller of the senses attains Wisdom; such a man attains ultimate peace (moksha) in no time.”

Thus we see that Jnana, Bhakti and Karma are brought on a par with each other; and each is said to be the help-mate of the other. It is also to be noticed in the Gita that the Lord at times speaks of Bhakti as the highest and at times Jnana as the highest, and at times Karma as the highest. Such distinctions are not really discriminatory but are distributary consisssently with the *adhikari bheda* of the various kinds of disciples, as the intrinsic character of such disciples can but vary according to their intellectual, emotional and volitional propensities.

It is also to be noted that all these courses unavoidably require some sort of worship or prayer. Gita teaches that prayer can never be congregational, which can however, some-times be of some value for removal of doubts, holding discussions on contentious matters and other things of the like nature. Real prayer must be in solitude and he really lives best who lives in seclusion. So the sages and saints of India very scrupulously made provision for Asan Suddhi, Bhuta Suddhi Prana Pratishta, Chakshudan,

Mantra Chaitanya. This is not the occasion when the efficacy of all these practices can be dilated upon. Lord Krishna laid the greatest possible stress upon the efficacy of these things in the Gita,

Another most controversial thing which has been set at rest in the Gita once for all is the question of Saguna or Nirguna Upasana, *i.e.* worship of the finite and that of the infinite. The Lord has declared that His nature is two-fold, one attributive and the other attributeless.

भूमिरापोनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
 अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥
 अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
 यजीवभूतां महाबाहो येदं धार्यते जगत् ॥

The Lord reiterates the same thing again in the 15th Chapter (vide the Sloka 15 and 16) where the different phases of the same Brahman have been delineated. Stupid really are they, immersed in palpable darkness of fathomless ignorance, who discriminate between the first and last stages of self-realisation. These

are but the rungs of an unbending ladder which have invariably to be scaled for reaching the Paramatman. The body and mind are finite. Every word we utter is a symbol of the finite, and often a defective symbol; every thought of our mind is a reflection of the finite and material things in the out-side world. So till the body and mind-sides of a man are lost in the all-pervading soul or Atma, all prayer and worship he can offer must be of the finite. To try to reach the top by a jump is an impossible task and is also extremely dangerous. The omnipresence of God has two aspects. His indwelling presence is called His Immanence. He is in everything and everything is in Him. So where is the harm in the worship of the finite if we can keep His transcendence in constant view while engaged in such worship? Many enter into this search for finite and infinite believing that if they can only still the mind with a perfect calm, the Divinity within must necessarily manifest itself. But perfect calmness of the mind will remain an ever receding mirage, till by following

certain courses of Sadhana you get yourself immersed in the Divinity itself which is the Soul or Prana in the human figure. By figure only figure can be reached or thought of. Make yourself figureless, and then understand the infinite and eternal nature of God. When you attain that stage, you yourself really become God. Because He is Sad Agand Tat param Yada "He is, He is not, and He is also above existence and non-existence."

Whatever course one may follow, one fundamental thing has always to be kept in mind and it is this that every action should be a deed and all unconscious activities have to be avoided:—

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

"Remember Me every moment of your life and continue in the struggle (till you reach me)." For this one must have faith, hope, love, resignation, patience, purity, humility, obedience and sacrifice and devotion. Always remember that we have to seek the eternal through the temporal. To him who lives in the realm of the material senses, the things of the senses are the realities

of life. To him, who rises in consciousness to an appreciation of the eternal, eternal values become the directing factors of his life. It may therefore be held that to instil in the mind an appreciation of the eternal values is the truest object of prayer and worship. All our endeavours in life and death should therefore be to put the light that illumines the eternal into the possession of an individual and embodied soul in such a way that nothing can extinguish that light. This is Christ's "Pray and Watch", "pray without ceasing" and "asking for supernatural bread."

ईक्ष्वरः सर्वभूनां हृद्देशेऽजन तिष्ठति ।

भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।

कर्माद्दयक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षिचेतः केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥

श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद् ॥

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च

खं वायुज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥

मुण्डकोपनिषद्

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।

अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

कटोपनिषद् ॥

Cease thinking altogether of a material world, of material people. Strive your utmost to think of perfection of God and of His endless Glories. Remember that there is no power but the infinite, power of eternal love and is also ever active, always available, and if a man only acts rightly in the way indicated above, he will become immortal and live in God and in fact become God.

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।

तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्

“ O Bharata, take shelter in Him alone in all possible ways. It is by virtue of His grace only that thou shalt attain the permanent abode (Immortality).

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहंत्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

“ Always think of Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, surrender thyself unto Me ; (If you behave like this) I give my words of honour unto thee, that thou shalt attain Me. I say to you all

these because thou art beloved of Me."

"Renounce all thy other pursuits, and take shelter absolutely in Me alone; (the results will be), I shall deliver thee out of all evils. Don't repent."

Pray, ceaselessly pray and say—

"O My Lord, I have turned my face unto Thee. Enlighten it with the lights of Thy Face and protect it from turning to any but Thee."

"O my God, disappoint me not. O Thou, most Merciful of the merciful." "O My God; thou hast created me to know Thee and to adore Thee. I testify to my powerlessness and to Thy power, to my weakness and to Thy Might, to my poverty and to Thy riches. There is no God but Thee. the Protector, the Self-subsistent."

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ॥
स्थिरैरङ्गस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः । स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो
वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषः विश्ववेदाः ॥ स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टने-
मिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्ददातु ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

SOME ASPECTS OF THE TEACHINGS OF BHAGVAD GITA.

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Moral Value of Reincarnation.

When a man dies, death does not put an end to his ever-growing desires for earthly objects and enjoyments. In fact, it is these desires that bring him back to earth. His repeated births are mainly determined by the intensity and duration of his carnal and other type of desires. Ordinarily when a man, not believing in the doctrine of reincarnation, is about to die, he is terribly mortified and utterly miserable, partly because of the pangs of death and the separation from his physical tabernacle in which he dwelt for a long time and partly because the dying person thinks he is torn away for ever from the earthly objects of his desires and he is never to come again to taste the fruit of earthly pleasure. Thus he dies full of deep disappointments. But an Indian who firmly believes in the fact of rebirth leaves his body at the time of death with

peace and resignation, fully certain that he would come again so long as he desires to enjoy his life on earth. For such an one death loses all its terror and horror. He faces it calmly and quietly.

Whatever he wants he is bound to get in the course of time as he is the Self and shares the divine life.

Death is not dreaded by Hindus. It is a means of liberation. It puts an end to bodily vesture only. The real man is untouched by it.

“As the dweller in the body experienceth in the body childhood, youth, old age, so passeth he on to another body; the steadfast one grieveth not thereat”, says Sri Krishna.

Real and Unreal.

The fact that the outer world with all its attractions and solid, seeming, multifarious forms is after all changing every moment and is therefore unreal, could hardly be denied or repudiated. It is so patent that it needs no proof. Any one who is accustomed to thoughtful observation and close reflection needs no argument to carry

conviction to him in regard to the transitory nature of this world. There is nothing wrong in calling a spade a spade. To state a true fact, however unpalatable, is not to take a gloomy view of life. To think of the unreality of the world is not futile. It has a moral as well as utilitarian value.

It is not unoften that one is confronted with dire misfortune and calamity of various kinds: ill-health, loss, penury, failure and discomfort; naturally one is down-hearted, forlorn and dejected, and finds it hard to bear one's miserable existence placidly. But one who habitually dwells on the passing nature of this mundane world does really put on a brave face and meets his ill-luck with equanimity. Whenever he is in sore need and has nothing to fall back upon, instead of breaking his heart, he takes a wise view of his hard lot and begins to remind himself that neither joy nor sorrow lasts for ever. After all, his dark days are as short-lived and momentary as his prosperous ones.

The idea of the unreality of the world, if

constantly borne in mind, helps a person to become desireless and care-free. There is no virtue higher than desirelessness. Desire is the root of sin, which gives rise in its turn to sorrow and suffering. He who has cultivated dispassion is capable of applying himself to any higher pursuit, because a carefree mind alone can accomplish great things in the intellectual, moral and spiritual realm.

He who has convinced himself that everything earthly is subject to change, decay and death does not allow himself to be attached to any earthly pleasure. He knows that it is momentary and is therefore not worthy of his attention. Thus we see that taking this moving world at its right value by no means plunges us into what is called a "dark and dreary view of life", but fills us with hope and cheer and makes us happy and contented.

"The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be, the truth about both hath been perceived by the seers of the essence of things.

Rationale of right activity.

Why is it that so much stress is laid by Sri Krishna upon action? The reason comes out very strongly when we turn to the third chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, where He speaks so much of action, the chapter called "The Yoga of Action." All depends upon action: "From food creatures become, from rain is the production of food; rain proceedeth from sacrifice; sacrifice ariseth out of action; know thou that from Brahma (Veda) action groweth" (III. 14-45). There is the process of life. The whole reproduction of beings, everything that makes a world, depends upon activity; for is it not written that: "For a Sage who is seeking Yoga, action is called the means." (Gita (VI. 3). "For the same sage when he is enthroned in Yoga, serenity is called the means." We read a little further and we find it said of the serene Sage: "Action in harmony with Me, let him render all action attractive." (Gita III. 26); so that this teaching of the value of action goes on from step to step. The reason why activity

is necessary is given us very fully in this same chapter. For it is declared: "As the ignorant act from attachment to action, O Bharata, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world. Let no wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to action."

Social Service.

It is said that the Hindus are selfish ; they care only for their individual well-being and liberation, and not for the welfare of their fellow-men, and the amelioration of their social, political and moral condition. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this unauthorised statement. Practically all the schools of Indian Philosophy believe in the common unity and the divinity of the Self. They are repeatedly enjoined by all the spiritual teachers to love their neighbours and every creature (*Sarvabhutam*) as much as their own selves, because they share one life. They are mutually dependent upon each other. As an injury done to one part of the body is felt by the whole body, so the loss or injury done to one man is felt by the others.

Another reason for working unselfishly and disinterestedly for others is this :

A man cannot be perfect without outgrowing egoism and selfishness. One of the recognised methods of overcoming selfish tendencies is service.

Every human being owes some debts to society. He contracts debts in relation to his family, nation and country. His growth and progress are, to a great extent, due to the help and guidance he has been receiving from his fellow-men. Unless and until he pays back all his dues to the uttermost farthing, he cannot win his freedom from the round of birth and death. No liberation, which is the goal of the effort of every Hindu, is possible without paying his Karmic debts, which in its turn demands constant activity.

Besides, one of the paths of union to God is Karma Yoga—Union with God through action. If an active and energetic man of the world desires to tread the path of spiritual perfection, he is not expected to renounce the world and

cease from active life as is wrongly supposed by some people who do not understand clearly the Hindu view of life as inculcated in the Gita.

Without learning to live in the lives of others one cannot proceed on the path of spiritual realisation,

One life,

All who are sharers of one life must inevitably, as parts of the whole, find their natural development and their happiness in harmony with the life of which they are parts. Disharmony is always productive of suffering. Only in harmony can peace and happiness be found; and the very moment we realize that there is but one life, as Sri Krishna said: "I pervade this universe with one fragment of My self and I remain"—the moment we realise that, we are bound logically also to realise that the part can only find its perfection and its happiness by harmony with the whole to which it belongs. Over and over again we see it pointed out that only by harmony with the world around us is it possible for humanity to advance, and to find

peace and happiness.

Sinner's Fate.

It is often alleged that the Hindu religion and philosophy hold out no hope or prospect of redemption for sinners. It does not grant any forgiveness of sin. Thus the outlook for his future well-being in the life beyond is rather gloomy and cheerless. A closer and deeper study of the fundamental principle of Indian philosophy reveals that, although there is no room for grace or forgiveness of sin in the teachings of higher Hinduism, yet they fill the heart of a sinner with dignified hope and confidence in the amelioration of his undesirable condition and attainment of perfectly moral life in the course of time.

Whatever may be the cause of his sins, they could be exhausted and put an end to by suffering. Having suffered once and having paid all his Karmic debts in the form of sorrow and suffering of every description here and hereafter, he becomes as pure as snow. He suffers because he sins, but deliverance from evil tendencies

and vicious propensities is entirely in his own hands.

However degraded and fallen a man may be, the moment he is awakened to his higher nature, the blissful Self, and learns to identify himself with It rather than with the form, he feels himself a better man and all his evil actions are burnt in the fire of wisdom.

“Even if thou art the most sinful of all sinners, yet shalt thou cross over all sin by the raft of wisdom,”

(Bhagvad Gita IV, 36).

THE DIVINE SOCIALISM OF THE GITA.

(By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri)

Some persons applaud socialism and communism and others condemn the same. In these slogan-shouting days, very few persons pause to reflect over the essential values. But the Gita is not the scripture of one epoch or one people and does not aim at any propaganda for any set of values. Its appeal is to the divine element in man and it seeks to release it and set it in operation. It seeks to elevate all humanity, in all times and items. The aim of this is to show that the highest and truest elements of real Socialism are found in the Gita and that it seeks to sublimate individualism into Socialism, and proceeds further to sublimate Socialism into divinism.

The Gita is appropriately called a Yoga Sastra not only because it deals with Karma Yoga and Dhyana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga and Prapathi Yoga and Gnana Yuga. but also because the root meaning of Yoga is union and the Gita

enables us to have a new and intimate communion and union with Nature and with the world of souls and God. Nature seems separate from Man and seems very often to be even hostile to Man. Man is apparently the enemy of his brother Man and is often seen to be the merciless tyrant and destroyer of all the other forms of Life. God is not visible like Nature or Man and is even doubted or denied and it does not seem to be possible to have any communion or union with Him. The real value of philosophy consists in revealing to us the principle of unity in this bewildering diversity and the real value of Religion has in making a warm living experience and a real vital fact of our inner consciousness what would otherwise be totally external to our being and a mere matter of cold intellectual assent. The Gita tells us that the world of Nature and the world of living beings are but the Apara Prakriti and the Para Prakriti of Ishwara and are one with Him and one with each other and that the apparently multiform bewildering diversity of life is but the variety of beads strung upon a

string.

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
 अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४ ॥
 अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
 जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ ५ ॥
 एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
 अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६ ॥
 मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
 मयि सर्वमितं प्रोतं सूत्रे मलिगणा इव ॥ ७ ॥

This is why the Gita is a scripture for the whole universe and for all time. Though it may flatter our vanity to say that it is a scripture for India or for the *Chaturvarnya*—and there are persons who go to the length of saying that only Brahmins can study it and the Bhashyas on it!—yet it speaks and appeals equally to all human beings. The words used in it are 'Narah' 'Manushyah' 'Manavah' etc. Sri Krishna says that all men seek Him at all times and everywhere.

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥
 स बुद्धिमान् मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥
 मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
 चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

The Lord says also : " I am same and equal in regard to all men. I have no hatred or partiality for any one. Those who love Me are in Me and I am in them". He promises salvation unto all in this birth itself. He asks Arjuna to affirm that no devotee of the Lord shall ever perish.

येषां त्वनन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
 अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
 ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिमुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥
 अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥
 प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जनाः न विदुरासुराः ।
 एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ॥
 न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
 शरीरवाङ् नाभिर्यत्कर्म प्राग्भते नरः ।
 श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।
 समोहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योस्ति न प्रियः ।
 ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥
 कौन्तेय प्रति जानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति

There is a natural transition from the above said gospel of unity and universality to the gospel of the equality of all and of the socialised life. What, after all, is the essence of the social-

ised life ? It is equality and fraternity and love and mutual aid. J. Ramsay. Macdonald says in his work on *The Socialist Movement* : " Mutual aid amongst men has played at least as great part in human history as the struggle for life ". But all through history we find individualism over-riding the socialistic instinct. Even after the declaration by the French Revolution that " all men are born free and equal " and the declaration by the American Revolution that " man has an inalienable right to life, liberty and happiness ", individualism has been rampant and exploitation of man has been the rule rather than the exception. Capitalism has been a dominant force in modern social life. Man now realises the economic failure of Capitalism and yearns for Socialism. Mr. MacDonald rightly says : " Thus our present system fails absolutely to satisfy the most primitive need of food, clothing and shelter for a large section ; it imposes absolute failure on others struggling to meet that need, and it places such great difficulties in the way of others that they cannot enjoy

life after those needs are satisfied ". But in modern times Socialism has taken the form of revolution and class-war and takes its stand on a materialistic interpretation of life and is totally unrelated to divinism. Communism and Anarchism are the modern ugly monstrous malformations of Socialism. We hear it said that " all private property is theft ". In the name of the rights of man, we find of new determinism and tyranny. Will it be possible to have a gentle evolutionary constructive Socialism in which, in a spirit of love of God and obedience to His commands, the community as a whole transform and transvalue and sublimate Individualism into Socialism of the right type ?

It is here that the Gita steps in and gives the right guidance to the distracted and self-destructive Humanity. The real socialism is brought in not by abolishing family or property, but by curbing passion and desire and possessiveness and a realisation of the truth that the world is created and pervaded by God and belongs to Him and that we can only enjoy it as

mere possessors for a while and in a spirit of trusteeship for His other children as well. The Isa Upanishad says:—

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥

The same divine teaching is contained in the doctrine of Aparā Prakriti and Parā Prakriti in Chapter VII of the Gita. The Lord gives us the gospel of *Loka Sangraha* and gives us the example of Janaka as a model nay, Himself as the supreme archetype of *Loka Sangraha* i. e. world welfare.

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कतुर्महसि ॥ २० ॥

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि । २२ ।

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्तमानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः । २३ ।

उत्सोदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।

संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः । २४ ।

सक्ताः ऋमण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वांसस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥ २५ ॥

Thus the contrasted attitudes are the attitudes of the Sakta (the desireful and possessive and egoistic man) and the Yukta or asakta who works in a mood of Lokasangraha (the unselfish altruistic man who shakes off egoistic possessiveness and works in a mood of surrender of the fruits of all actions to Sri Krishna and for the welfare of all. The Lord refers to the Law of Higher life imposed by the Creator on all His creatures-the Law of Paraspara bhavana (mutual aid and service).

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।

अनेन प्रसन्नियध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ।

देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवाः भावयन्तु वः ।

परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ।

The Supreme Lord has laid the Supreme Law of life viz. *Paraspara bhavana* i.e. mutual aid and nourishment and dependence on Gods as well as men. Nature yields abundance of food and clothing and shelter under the vivifying grace of the gods. It is not man's wonder-

ful skill or prowess that brings about such a result. Can he really make two blades of grass grow where but one grew before? No.

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवाः दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।

तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः १२

It is the gods that give us plentifully what we imperatively need in life. Who is a thief? It is he who takes another's property without his consent. We must not take what the gods produce without rendering unto them the best of those things. They merely accept what is offered in love without causing any diminution of it to us. Use what they give for yourself and your brethren after rendering the same as a love-offering and a thanks-offering to them. But he who appropriates the same in a feverish mode of total possessiveness and cooks and eats the same in a spirit of thankless and graceless exclusiveness is a thief.

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यतू ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ।

Our mood towards all created beings should be one of equality and love and renunciation.

and service. Sri Krishna is very fond of two phrases *i e.* समदशनः समबुद्धयः and सर्वभूतहिते रतः See also इहेव तैजितः येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः। These phrases mean equality and loving service.

Non-injury is essential. It is not only non-injury, but also non-anger and non-hatred.

Thus *ahimsa*, *akrodha*, *adroha*, *maithri*, *karuna*, philanthropy, service, renunciation, brotherhood and love are as much of the essence of the truly religious life as devotion to God. In short, such man feels the joys and griefs of all as his joys and griefs and feels all to be a portion of himself and himself to be a portion of all and feels all-including himself, to be one with God.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च नयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ।
सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ।
आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥

THE BHAGAVAD GITA—THE UNIVERSAL LIGHT.

(Sri. N. K. Srivastava, M. A. L.L. B.)

The Bhagavad Gita is the only real miracle in the universe. Its study is an intrinsic triumph and eminently self-rewarding. Its thorough study leads to intellectual perfection. Its practice leads to all round perfection. Immensely useful as is the knowledge of all the arts and sciences of the world, it is a mere trifle as compared with the knowledge embodied in the Bhagavad Gita. Carlyle held Shakespeare to outvalue the Indian Empire. The knower of the Bhagavad Gita holds the empire of the three worlds in contempt.

The Bhagavad Gita can be studied (1) as a historical document, (2) as an interpretation of the Hindu scriptures, (3) as a mystic allegory, (4) as a 'Tantra' and (5) as the science of spirituality.

As a historical document, it lays down why a war must be fought in the last resort and how,

i.e. with what attitude of the mind. It embodies the most important principle of political organisation, violation of which necessitates and justifies war. The principle is this. Governments are organised to secure mass self-realization according to psychological and geographical conditions obtaining in any particular country. Whenever this mass programme of self-realization is sought to be thwarted by another nation or party, war must be waged. Originally Sikhism in India came into being for this very purpose. It does not matter what the hindrances are. They may be economic, political, social, cultural, scientific, communal, or even religious. They may be direct or indirect. The only condition is that you take up arms to fight selflessly in the eyes of God for those organizations and principles that seek to accelerate self-realization of the individual as well as of the nation. Until this principle of human spiritual realization according to the Gita is adopted by the presentday international law and the contemplated world state as the basis of universal war and peace, no

principle of legal, political or economic contract can save humanity from impending disaster.

As an interpretation of the Hindu scriptures, the Gita demonstrates that human self-realization is a scientific process of human evolution. Incessant action is of its essence. Action means, at best, selfless service of humanity rendered most heartily and cheerfully. Thus the Gita resolves the conflict of motives of action in the Hindu scriptures which were followed differently by different groups of men, chief of which were the *Mimamsaks*, the *Sankhyavadins* and the miracle-mongering *Yogis*.

As a mystic allegory, the Gita is believed to contain the esoteric doctrine of Yoga. As such it gives perfect guidance to those who seek to realize themselves by means of the practice of Yoga. The method is highly technical and requires the best guidance of a spiritual adept.

As a Tantra, it is much less practised. But when practised with selfless service of humanity as the 'open sesame' of the hidden powers of the Gita, no Tantra of the world can equal it

in its quick results, sure and certain and otherwise impossible of attainment by means of any other Tantra, art, science or magic. The official scriptures of the Hindus are the Vedas. The elucidation of the highest principle of the Vedas has been made in the Gita. But since the Gita was discoursed by Lord Sri Krishna, the full Avatar of God, it towers even above the Vedas. As containing words directly spoken by the Lord, its repeated recitation has several values. First, it is psychological. It brings about a pronounced change in the psychological make-up of the individual. It alters his character and therefore his destiny. It transforms his mental currents, strengthens the brain, vitalizes the physical body,—in a word, re-charges all the cells of the body with the peculiar ultra-atomic energy produced by the vibrations of its words. Secondly, it is miraculous. It wards off death, disease, disaster and accident. It brings happiness, prosperity, success, victory. It wards off all evil influences and brings about a favourable change in the circumstances and environments in an im-

perceptible way. It confers wish-fulfilment. Thirdly, it is evolutionary. It accelerates self-realization. Fourthly, it is magical. It serves the purpose of the most potent charms and talismans provided it is backed up by selfless service of humanity irrespective of caste, colour, creed, country or sex. Fifthly; it is incidental. It brings about meetings with perfect saints, spiritual adepts, people inhabiting the higher worlds. Above all it leads to communion with God. The process is comparatively simpler than that enjoined in the case of the other Tantras. It should be continuously recited with sincerity and understanding, until the desired result is obtained, selfless service, of course, being a necessary accompaniment.

As the science of self-realization, the Gita is simply topping. The science of self-realization is the obscurest. The ways and means of self-realization are so various and conflicting that the path of self-realization is very difficult to tread. The Gita sheds a flood of sunshine upon that path and makes it perfectly smooth, interesting and easy to tread, at every step self-

guiding. The Bhagavad Gita prescribes cheerful selfless service of humanity until the Divine Light reveals itself inwardly. Selfless service according to the Gita comprises whatever good an individual can do to another individual or group. According to the psycho-analysis underlying the science of the Gita, selfless service is the only efficacious means of eradicating egoism. Egoism is essentially the greedy, all-appropriating self built up through ages of self-seeking activities. Thus a doctor, as such, can achieve self-realization by rendering selfless medical service to his patients. A teacher can do the same by disseminating real and useful knowledge selflessly among his students. A rich business man can realize himself by means of liberal charity. The essence of selfless service lies in placing all the individual capacities and capabilities and their products at the free disposal of those who need them. There should be absolutely no idea of remuneration or recompense in any form whatever. And such service of humanity is really the service of God.

The substance of the Gita. The Gita comprises eighteen chapters. About ten thousand years ago the Lord expounded the science of self-realization to Arjuna in seventeen chapters of the Gita. Each chapter can stand by itself, while each is an integral part of the whole of the Gita. This is the beauty of the Lord's style. The Gita, in its individual chapters and as a whole, is an exposition of the Mahavakya (the great utterance) "तत्त्वमसि": "That Thou Art". The first six chapters expound mainly "त्वम्" or "Thou". The next six chapters expound "That" or "तत्" and the last six chapters expound "असि" or "art". In fact all the verses of the Gita could be grouped into three sections, the first dealing with the explanation of the term "त्वम्" or "Thou", the next of "तत्" or "That". and the last dealing with the explanation of "असि" or "art". Now each of these three concepts has a double significance: one integrative or egoistic, the other absolute, or differential or non-egoistic, ultimate. One set of meaning comprises the theory. The other set prescribes the practice.

Most people have wrecked their careers of self-realization by seeking self-complacence in the intellectual assimilation of the theory; others have bungled with the practice of the Gita by confusing the Gita doctrine of action with fantastic activities of self-mortification. The Gita doctrine of action prescribes selfless service of humanity as the first essential of spiritual realization. Failures of very brilliant men in their otherwise very promising careers of self-realization have been invariably due to their inadequate selfless service of the race.

The integrative or egoistic significance of “त्वम्” or “Thou” is this. O man you have integrated about your nucleus egoistic influences. Your personality is a product of the fruits that you have enjoyed or that you wish to enjoy by performing self-seeking actions. Your personality is therefore a powerful integration of lust, anger, pride, greed and attachment. As such you can neither see your real nucleus nor “That”—the ultimate reality underlying the universe. Theoretically therefore the Mahavakya means

this: ' O Man, if you analyse the constituents of your personality, you are none of the accretions. Your real nucleus is the same as "That". "That" appears to you as a universe of distinct names, forms, and existences. These appearances are only relative to your egoistic self. Really "That" is not the aggregate of appearances. Appearances are illusory like crumples on a sheet of paper, or ripples or waves on the surface of water or vortices in the blazing fire. To drive conviction into the mind, the force of empirical argument is utilised to the full".

The absolute or non-egoistic significance of "त्वं" or "Thou" is realized when the accretions are cast away. The integrated influences apart, your nucleus, O man, is the same as "That". In reality you and "That" are numerically identical. "That" is where forms dissolve into Sat-chit-ananda, names become one, "OM" activities merge into eternal knowledge and self-bliss. "असि" or "art" signifies the practical discipline whereby the egoistic elements are got rid of, and the absolute identity between the

individual's nucleus and ultimate reality is re-established. *Practically*, therefore, the Mahavakya means this: 'O man, engage yourself in unremitting selfless service of humanity until egoism is completely blasted, the real nucleus is recovered, and you are established in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is practice which transforms the mere man into Godhead.

The Gita is, therefore, no arm-chair philosophy that is puffed out with the smoke of the cigarette. It is complete theory and practice of the spiritual science of self-realization. As such its value is intrinsic and ultimate. It is the science of the sciences. It is deeper than life itself.

Stated in simplest words, the theory and practice of the scientific philosophy of the Gita is as follows:

The Soul minus impure Maya is Brahma (Godhead). God minus Pure Maya is Brahma (Godhead). In Brahma or Godhead, man and God are one. Maya is a system of patterns superimposed upon Brahma. These patterns are purely illusory. They are relative to the

mind and the senses. The mind and the senses are limited to the perception of the patterns. Pure Maya implies a transparency and control over the patterns. That is why God sees and knows the illusory character of the patterns and has the power to manipulate them. At the same time God is perfectly conscious of Godhead or Brahma. Impure Maya implies an opaqueness of the patterns, an obtuseness of the knowledge and helplessness in relation to them. That is why man cannot see through the multifarious forms, the real essence. From this ignorance arise his attempts to analyse the nature of the patterns and their underlying essence. Partial knowledge of the nature and function of the patterns is embodied in the various sciences and arts of the east and the west of which man is so foolishly proud. Guesses of the essence underlying the patterns are the philosophies of the great thinkers of the world. Knowledge of the essence is denied to the scientist and the philosopher alike. The reason is that both the scientist and the philosopher bank upon their senses and intellect

for the knowledge of the essence. The truth, according to the Gita, is that the essence can be known neither by the intellect nor by the senses. The Gita says in unambiguous terms that the essence can be known directly by a superior organ of knowledge. This is called intuition. Now intuition is not an incident of birth. It is the result of spiritual evolution and is in every case a matter of personal achievement. Nobody has it like the eyes or the ears. But everybody can develop it for the potentiality is there and is latent in man. There are stages in its development. To begin with, man should render long and continued selfless service to humanity. At the next stage he should practise meditation and self-control, progressively. In the last stage he should renounce the domination of the senses and the intellect completely and devote himself exclusively to meditation and selfless service and humanity. According to the Gita, there is no particular type of service that is necessary for self-realization. "All service counts the same with God." It depends upon "my

station and its duties" as to what service I can do to my race but certainly I must choose the station with the view of serving humanity. It depends upon what kind of service a man can render to the best of his powers and abilities. That is why Mahatma Gandhi has realised himself by political service to humanity and taken along with him Pt. Jawaharlal and company to the destination. That is why Swami Sivananda has reached the topmost heights of self-realization by rendering medical and spiritual aid to innumerable men all over the world. In fact the civil, military, police and judicial services offer the greatest opportunities of self-realization if they are organised on the principle of selflessness and entered into with the object of self-realization through constant selfless service. But men enter into them for money, power and pelf. They are organised on the basis of business—give and take,—with a certain amount of undue bias in favour of the Government. According to the Gita, public service is the profession of selfless service for self-realization. After self-realization,

egoism, Maya, and the intellect merge into "That" along with the nucleus of "self".

The Gita solves the world problem on the basis of an ultimate principle. Thus it is that with the help of the Gita, we can see three things very clearly. First, the unity of the religions of the world. All religions in their own way, seek to open the eye of intuition in order to enable their followers to see God and merge into Godhead. Next the goal of human life. It is evolution, spiritual self-realization. All national and international organisations must be based in this fundamental principle. All public services, business and professions must be reorganised on this principle. All wars based on political, economic, religious and racial grounds must vanish if the world is reorganised on the principle of the Gita. At the same time, all selfishness, cruelty and immorality of man should disappear. Education should become the greatest mission. Lastly, the Gita enables us to see the errors underlying the present-day civilization. The errors are these: (1) Through the ages of its

development, it has placed the cart before the horse. There have been in the world in every country realised men in all the ages. Instead of practising the truths these realised souls preached, men exercised their intellects upon them. Their followers tried to illuminate and glorify these truths by reasoning. Their opponents sought to damage them by hostile criticism. Much time, life and property were wasted in these useless pursuits and the bloody clashes arising out of them. During the middle ages the fallacy arose from trying to prove or disprove intuitive truths by intellectual processes. (2) Since the modern era dawned, intuitive truths have been sought to be reached by empirical methods of science. Before the scientific method has been perfected by the technique of developing intuition, men have been seduced by the discoveries of science and the power conferred on them by bombs and planes to build up political and economic dominions. (3) Just when Bergson came perilously near intuition, the psychoanalysts reversed the gear. At the present day

they exhort man to indulge in his instincts in the name of health and happiness. Instead of being after the ultimate knowledge of the essence of the things, man is now after the thing themselves: wealth, wine, woman and wilful world-domination. With the help of science he seeks feverishly to discover and perfect the ways and means for indulging in his instincts and senses. (4) Christianity gave to Europe two great institutions. Had the people of Europe understood their real secret and developed them on their original lines, the European civilization would have been far different from what it is to-day. And it would have been perfect. The two institutions were the monasteries and knighthood. The Gita enables us to understand that the monasteries were really centres for practising Sankhya Yoga. The monasteries became corrupt and defunct. Their fall brought religion into disfavour with the people and put them on the path of materialism. Henceforth, in a way, religion contributed to the evolution of a Godless civilization of the materialistic west of to-day. The Gita enables

us to understand the institution of chivalry. It was the institution of selfless service or "Karma Yoga" as Sir Galahad practised it. The Holy Grail was the cup of intuition in which the wine of Godhead was drunk. But since its principle was not understood, it degenerated into knight-errantry for winning beautiful and accomplished ladies. The legacy which this institution has bequeathed to Europe is freedom in sex-matters of the modern civilization. From a wrong attitude to the sex, a wrong psychological synthesis was the natural result. The study of this synthesis lead Dr. Freud to his famous thesis on psychoanalysis. In the absence of deeper knowledge, Dr. Freud prescribed the wrong remedies. Wrong remedies are bound to worsen ailments and the civilization of to-day must perish or take recourse to the Gita for the right remedies and the rectification of its underlying errors. (5) As a result of these errors the social system of Europe gave birth to national organisations. These organisations, ignorant of the fundamental Godhead of man and the spiritual

purpose of human life, engaged themselves in mutually destructive warfare from purely economic, political, racial, sexual, and pseudo-religious motives. The evil has spread all over the world. It is a wrong diagnosis that the philosophy of history is fundamentally economic. In fact it is only a general statement of fact. The truth is that the philosophy of history is ignorant and erroneous violation of the principle of evolution, i. e. spiritual realization. Hence, while two world wars have been fought out, the third is coming on.

The Gita enables us to see these errors and exhorts us to reorganize the world as a unit on the principle of man's spiritual advancement. Public service, business and professions must be reorganised to secure the good of every man intrinsically. Education all the world over must be directed to the evolution of intuition in every individual so that the futility of the hard and bitter struggle in the pursuit of the shadows may be seen through. Science should direct the discovery of ways and means for accelerating intui-

tional evolution. Reward and punishment as ultimate standards of good and evil, merit and sin, must give way to the standards of evolution, spiritual self-realization. The Gita enables us to formulate a higher code of morals and laws on the principle that whatever tends to delay, obstruct, deflect, retard or arrest the evolution of intuition is inhuman and therefore not allowed by the forces of civilization, while all that tends to expedite the evolution of intuition is human and civic excellence. Science should discover how man's fitness to achieve self-realization can be increased and democratised. It should produce synthetic foods from non-sentient materials so as to eliminate the slaughter of animals and the destruction of green trees, plants and herbs. It should enable man to become proof against extreme weather, disease, hunger, mental and bodily weakness. It should attempt to win glory for itself by developing and educating the sub-human forms of life that they may be fit to receive a course of intuitional training.

That art alone is the true art according to

the Gita, which, for the time being, raises us above the patterns and the senses and enables us to have a glimpse of the essence, to have a foretaste of Godhead. That philosophy alone is truly useful which rescues the intellect from wasting life in non-intuitional pursuits in the labrynth of the patterns, and exhorts it to let man achieve intuitive insight. That literature alone is commendable which gives us a taste of transcendental excellence. That life and conduct alone is excellent, according to the Gita, which move towards the attainment of self-realization through intuitive insight. According to the Gita, the different churches are merely so many schools and the different scriptures are merely as many text-books for the sole object of achieving intuitive insight for spritual self-realization. While the principles of the science of self-realization are true for all times to come and for all countries and nations, the expositions will always have the variety of interest for the display of individual genius, literary, scientific and linguistic. Understood

in the light of the Bhagawad Gita, The Bible—The Koran—The Vedas—The Zend Avesta—The Granth Saheb—Many other scriptures extinct as well as yet to be are one and the same in fundamentals

According to the Gita there is no clash among the religions, the sciences, the arts, the philosophies, the nations of the world if the truth is understood and realized. An ideal life according to the Gita is a life of harmonious exercise and adjustment of the instincts, the intellect, the emotions and the intuition with reference to the sole object of achieving self-realization.

OM

THE MESSAGE OF GITA

(Hon. Justice. N. Chandrasekhara Aiyar.)

The Gita is a universal gospel of peace and harmony and mental equipoise. It is not a teaching to Arjuna in particular ; it is a message to all mankind and it teaches how the imperfect human being can by exertion and discipline-mental, moral and physical-become divine. According to the Gita, God is one and not many, though He is conceived under different forms and is worshipped under different names, by different people. True worship and devotion, whatever be the methods adopted, reach Him. What is needed is a realisation of one's own duties and their due performance, with non-attachment to the results or fruits of action, but with unswerving faith in the grace, the benevolence and the wisdom of the Lord. Action accompanied with discrimination about the real and the unreal is a sure step to the attainment

of Wisdom, enlightenment and ultimate bliss. Action based on knowledge and inspired by devotion is the requisite of success not only in the material world but also on the spiritual path.

The keynote of the Gita is *Bhakti* and *prapatti* (devotion and surrender) proclaimed in the resounding verses.

Their applicability transcends ages, climes and races. They contain a message of Eternal Truth. In our greeds, jealousies and vanities we forget these words of perennial wisdom and thus become heirs to ills, misfortunes, despondencies and strifes.

The Gita contains esoteric as well as exoteric teaching. The ordinary man in the street is as much the object of its lessons as the adept or competent *Adhikari* who yearns for and strives after the Unknown and the Unseen. It contains a message of hope for all—the high and the low the rich and the poor, the intellectual as well as the ignorant, the proud and the humble, the saint and the sinner. The highest philosophical

truths are closely and cleverly interwoven by the Maha-Yogeswara with simple methods and forms of worship of God suitable for the common man and the common woman, who will have to take probably many, many more births before reaching that stage of intellectual development which will impel them to seek liberation from the bondage of *Samsara* and the endless cycle of births, deaths and re-births. The synthesis of the Gita, combining the three paths of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, and taking within the ambit of its instruction the adept and the novice, is the most wonderful characteristic of the Song, and in this respect, it is an improvement even on the Upanishads, whose teaching it seeks to condense and crystallize.

The Gita has rightly been proclaimed as the Song Celestial. Its verses and its lessons must become part and parcel of our daily lives. They must course in our veins and tingle in our blood. Cast away pusillanimity, rouse thyself to action, and do thy ordained duty, unperturbed by the consequences, which will be the care of Him who

dwells in every heart. This is its inspiring solaceful message ; who can afford in this distraught world to ignore or neglect it ? The Bhagavad Gita is an infalliable guide to progress and spiritual illumination,

GITA DHARMA

(Mahamandsleshwar 108 Swami Shri Vidyananda
Saraswati)

Gita Dharma in essence means the sum total of the fundamental philosophical truths expounded in Srimad Bhagavad Gita which forms part of the Mahabharata, the greatest Epic of the present age. Gita has been rightly acclaimed as the Immortal song and Universal Gospel in the field of Adhyatmic culture. The reason is not far to seek. The author of this famous philosophical song is no other than the Lord of the Universe incarnated in the person of Bhagawan Krishna. Gita has emanated from the mouth of one who holds the position of Jagat Guru. The expression 'Jagat' comprises the whole Brahmanda and it follows that the Gospel preached by the Lord as 'Jagat Guru' is of Universal application.

Consequently Gita Dharma or the path of righteousness leading to the emancipation of

the soul and the attainment of final beatitude is rightly called as Vishwa Dharma or Universal Dharma. It would be no exaggeration to say that Gita Dharma transcends all barriers of clime, cast, creed, sect, faith or Sampradaya in the same way as the Sun shines forth and bestows his effulgence on the entire humanity without difference or discrimination.

It was given to the people of Bharata Varsha and Arya Varta to receive the supreme gift of Gita Amrut or nectar of wisdom from the hands of Gita-Pati Bhagawan Krishna and it behaves one and all to share this gift with the rest of the world and promote universal peace and happiness.

It was Adi Shankaracharya who picked out this gem of wisdom song from the Mahabharatha and expounded to the world the precious value that should be attached to the Song Divine. We are extremely indebted to Adi Shankaracharya for having made us realise the glory and greatness of Gita and the Universal Dharmic ideals propounded therein. That Gita

has secured a place of honor in the sphere of Adhyatmic Granthas will be patent from the fact of its being one of the three major works on which Adi Shankaracharya wrote his commentary, the other two being the Brahma Sutras and the Upanishads.

The lead given by Adi Shankaracharya in the field of Adhyatmic campaign with special reference to Gita Dharma was continued without interruption from century to century by the Samayacharyas and Heads of Religious institutions who came after him with the result that the Gita Dharma has at the present day attained world-wide popularity by attracting learned scholars and philosophers both in the east and west. It may be no exaggeration to say that the band of selfless souls who have been treading the path of Gita Dharma have not only preached unto others but also have attained to the state of perfection by upholding the spiritual ideals representing Gita Dharma. Without any fear of contradiction I may make bold to say that whosoever entertains unshakable faith

in the Gita Dharma and the universal ideals for which it stands is bound to reap the beneficial fruits thereof not only in this birth but in future births and eventually release himself from the bondage of Samsaric wheel of births and deaths and attain everlasting peace in the abode of the Lord wherefrom there is no return to this Mrityu Loka.

Gita Dharma is indeed a precious gift given to us by the Lord which has the power of serving as a beacon light to the entire humanity. It rests with us to make proper use of this gift. He who does Seva by preaching the Gospel of Lord Krishna attains the divine abode, paran Dhama, devoid of future births and this has been explicitly brought out in the Gita by the Lord himself in the concluding portion of the 18th chapter.

I may say with confidence that what has been stated above is based on my own practical experiences gathered ever since I started Gita prachar about 25 years ago. It is idle to deny that there has been a gradual and steady spiri-

tual awakening among the masses which may be attributed to the large extent to which the Gita Dharma has begun to appeal to popular minds as a universal path thrown open to all regardless of caste or creed. An index to the progress made in this direction, can be had from the fact, that various institutions like the Congress, Hindu Maha Sabha, etc., and leaders of new movements whether religious, social or political, have begun to draw inspiration from the Gita which only goes to prove the intrinsic worth of an invaluable gem of wisdom.

May the Flute-bearer of Brindavan give us all immense strength and courage to uphold our spiritual traditions, to serve humanity with unswerving faith and devotion ; to act up to the noble and selfeess ideals set by the Gita Dharma, to cross the ocean of Samsara and reach the goal of perfection in this very birth.

THE BHAGVAT GITA.

(Sri P. K. Lakshmi Narayanan.)

Bhagavad Gita is one of the Holiest Scriptures of the Hindus. Its enormous popularity bears testimony to its worth. Its reputation is not confined to the Indian continent and peoples alone. It seems to enjoy a well-merited esteem in Europe and America as well.

This work of 18 chapters is a small portion of the Great Epic, Mahabharata. It occurs in the Bhishma parva and consists of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna wherein the former propounds the highest truths of religion and philosophy to the latter.

Sri Badarayana, also known as Sri Veda Vyasa, is the author of the Epic. He is also, of course, the author of the Bhagavad Gita. The orthodox belief is that Sri Veda Vyasa is an Avatar of Sri Maha Vishnu.

Adi Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhwa begin their commentary with a brief introduction. The first two dwell on

the greatness of Sri Krishna and introduce the work. Sri Madhwa dwells on the greatness of Sri Badarayana and the Mahabharata, and expatiates on Bhagavad Gita as the quintessence of all that is sweet and great in the great Epic.

The divergence between Sri Madhwa on the one hand and the other two commentators on the other, seems to be of some significance. There is controversy on two important points to be noted in this connection :—

(1) Is Sri Veda Vyasa an incarnation of God ?

(2) Is the Bhagavad Gita, as it is found, the work of Sri Veda Vyasa or of Sri Krishna ?

As to the first point, Vedanta Desikar seems to be decidedly of opinion that Sri Veda Vyasa is no God incarnate, but only a Maharashi, who had faults and failings like other human beings, and had prarabdhas also to suffer.

On the other hand, Sri Madhwa quotes texts of authority in support of the position that Sri Veda Vyasa is an incarnation of God. In this most members of the Sankara School

seem to concur. Even among the members of the Visishtadwaita School opinion does not seem to be unanimous.

Thus, there is no sufficient reason to ignore Sri Veda Vyasa and the Mahabharata in connection with the high merits of the Bhagavad Gita.

This leads us to consider the second point noted above. Some people take it that all the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad Gita are the actual words of Sri Krishna IN METRE just as they are found. They say that Sri Veda Vyasa's part consisted only in finding a place for it in the Epic. Others, however, say that the Bhagavad Gita is as much the work of Sri Veda Vyasa as other parts of the Epic, where truths are expounded by means of dialogues. It may be that Sri Krishna taught Arjuna these Truths. But the Divine Author Sri Veda Vyasa knew the presentment of the subject by first hand knowledge and represented it whole-sale in a versified form. Passages found elsewhere in Mahabharata have been relied on in support of both the views indicated above.

To the orthodox believer who takes both Sri Veda Vyasa and Sri Krishna as incarnations of God, the controversy merits little or no interest. As God is not conceivable without omniscience, it is easy to see that what He taught by one form was reproduced by another, verses and all. It is equally admissible that the teachings of Sri Krishna, perhaps communicated in a different tongue or dialect, or perhaps in prose under the exigencies of VIVA VOCE instruction, have been faithfully handed down to us by Sri Veda Vyasa in the shape in which we find Bhagavad Gita.

One point deserves some stress in respect to the arguments employed by both sides. Because the work is known by the name of "Bhagavad Gita" they say that the author is fully vindicated by the name, so that none but Sri Krishna can be said to have had any hand therein. But this is a fallacy. Throughout the epic and elsewhere too, the dialogue is the method largely employed as the medium of narration of instruction. There is "Gopi Gita"

Bhramara Gita, Sruti Gita, Ashtavakra Gita and so on, for instance. These designations do not exclude the authorship of Sri Veda Vyasa and there is no special reason to interpret the name 'Bhagavad Gita' alone from a different standpoint, employing other canons of construction than hold good as a rule.

You may feel this as a digression. But it may throw some light on the different angle of vision with which the commentators have approached the subject. Sri Madhwa attributed the authorship to Sri Veda Vyasa in the fullest measure, without, however, detracting from the merits of the work as the teachings of Sri Krishna. Others do not always speak of Sri Veda Vyasa with the full realization of the fact that He is no other than Sri Krishna, both being the God Supreme and identical with each other in the fullest sense.

In trying to do justice to my work, I was forced to make something like a comparative study. Nobody is more conscious and convinced than I am of my incompetence for the task.

But a strong hope that others more competent may, in due time, take up and continue this work is my chief excuse.

People may differ from me and feel unconvinced by my reasoning, but I pray that no motive be attributed to me. It is nothing but the exigencies of frank discussions that have called for the language used and not a carping spirit of fault-finding.

Differences are not surprising, for, you know by personal experience, that, even in the interpretation of modern legislative enactments which by means of definitions and illustrations, have done their best to secure unanimity in judicial decisions, eminent judges very often differ in the construction of statutes. The Bible and the Koran have given rise to differences of interpretation and to the formation of different religious sects such as the Protestant, the Roman Catholic, the Greek Church (to say nothing of the sub-divisions such as Calvinists, Free Church, High Church) among Christians ; and Sunnies, Shiabs, and Wahabees among

Mohammadans.

It is, however, hardly necessary to state that the Bhagavad Gita is held in the highest estimation by all schools of Hindu philosophy and enjoys a world-wide reputation and popularity for its sublime teachings. The Gita preaches, in brief, the highest ideal of duty under all conditions of life. Those who are acquainted with the Sanskrit language will find it very useful and interesting.

I have stopped at this point as my poor scholarship would let me advance no further.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE GITACHARYA TO THE CULTURAL UNITY OF INDIA

**By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph. D.,
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India has a genius for unity which is based on the unshakable foundation of her spiritual culture. In spite of the apparent tension and disruption that are visible on the surface of her social life and are restricted to the sophisticated few, there is in the heart of India a disposition for peace and harmonious living. Several streams of alien communities have flown into this vast ocean ; and except for a bubble here or a wavelet there, the waters have mingled in an inseparable confluence, and the depths have remained calm. The greatest men of India have always been, not distinguished statesmen valiant warriors, or astute merchants, but the messengers of the Spirit who appeal to the fundamental unity of all in the basic Reality which is spiritual and a comprehensiveness of outlook which knows no narrow distinctions. They are the true bearers of culture which is

sweetness and light—sweetness that expresses itself as universal love and light that is spiritual wisdom. Their call is not to 'my clan' or to 'my community', but to the whole of humanity. Their message is not for a particular country or age, but for the entire world and for all time.

Among the Messiahs of Indian culture Sri Krishna has the pride of place by virtue of the perennial philosophy he has taught through the *Bhagavad Gita*. He is the most beloved of India's prophets. His gospel, as enshrined in the *Gita*, has a fascinating appeal to men in all stages of life and in every avocation. With the passing of centuries, it has gained in importance and popularity. The *Bhagavad Gita* has rightly come to be recognised as the world's best philosophical song.

The two main characteristics of culture—the light of truth and a sweetness of disposition find a prominent place in the *Gita* teaching. The first mark of culture is the possession of an ability to distinguish the true from the false. Overcome by a passionate attachment to kith

and kin, Arjuna lost his power of discrimination, and thought that the soul is a victim of death. The first lesson that Sri Krishna taught him was that the Self is immortal. The wrong identification of the Spirit with the psycho-physical organism is the cause of misery. The finitude and plurality that are predicated of the Self are the result of avidya. Wisdom lies in the realisation that the universal Spirit is the sole reality, eternal and unchanging, neither acting nor acted upon, and surpassing all that is fleeting and phenomenal..

The Gitacharya countenances in the *Gita* both the absolutistic and the theistic ways of approach to the Spirit. The Self as the Absolute is quality-less and relationless : it is *nirguna* ; it is the supreme Brahman, without defects (*nirdosha*) and distinctions (*sama*). But such a realisation is not within the easy reach of all. The way of the *Avyakta* is difficult for those who are habituated to a pluralistic outlook. And so, the ideal of the near-phenomenal *Isvara* is extensively taught in the *Gita*. God is

related to the world of matter and souls as its ground and controller. He is the prime mover and the underlying principle of all beings. Man's aim should be to attune himself to God's will and serve as His instrument (*nimitta*). The different religions of the world teach various ways of accomplishing this end. To the cultured soul it would be evident that what matters is *faith*, and not the particular form in which it is expressed. He is a barbarian who 'is blind to the excellences in others. There is nothing so despicable and derogatory to the dignity of the Spirit in man as a war of faiths. He who is possessed of a sweetness of disposition—which, we saw, is a mark of culture—will never despise the other man's faith. "However men approach me," says Krishna, "even so do I seek them ; for all men follow my path from all sides."

The author of the *Gita* does not insist on any particular mode of worship. One may mechanically go through the routine of ritualistic worship, without putting his soul into it. But it would do him no good. What God looks for

is not *what* is given to Him, but *how* it is given. Be it a flower or a fruit, a leaf or a handful of water it should be offered to the Deity *with faith*. And these external offerings should culminate in the greatest of sacrifices, the sacrifice of oneself to God (*atma-nivedana*). The outward things that are offered are only symbols or tokens of the inward soul-gift. True devotion is dedication of one's life to God's service.

The difference, then, between the man of the world and the man of God is that while the former is attached to the objects that perish and spends his substance in acquiring and conserving them, the latter is yoked to the imperishable Lord of all beings. Both are observed to act. But while the worldly individual acts from passion and for the sake of some private advantage, the devotee of God performs his duties without any selfish motive, and seeks to attain Godhead through self-less work. The secret of karma-yoga lies in seeing *akarma* in *karma*. In the midst of intense activity, the karmayogin maintains his mental equipoise ; because he is not attached

to the results of his doings. Success and failure are the same to him. Even if he should lose the whole world he would not mind ; what he cares for is getting nearer to God.

When through the performance of duty and the worship of the Deity, the spiritual aspirant has cleansed his heart, he becomes fit to receive the highest wisdom (*buddhi-yoga*). The intuitive knowledge of the Absolute is the final liberator. The darkness of ignorance which is the breeder of the ills of *samsara* is dispelled when the sun of wisdom rises. There is nothing so pure as *jnana*, says the Gitacharya. It burns away all dross, and reveals the non-dual Self. For a person who has realised his oneness with all beings, there are no obligations, no rounds of duties. He rejoices in the Self ; he is satisfied in the Self ; he is content in the Self. Nothing else is real to him ; nothing else exists for him. In his case the fire of knowledge has consumed the delusion-bred desires. There is nothing for him to achieve, nor anything to leave ; for he has attained the unexcellable happiness, which appeared to have

been lost for a while, but which is eternally real as the nature of the non-dual Spirit,

It is true that the man of self-realisation has no obligations to others. But so long as others see him as an individual endowed with a body, he acts in such a way as to set an example to the world. Sri Krishna cites his own case when he says to Arjuna, 'There is nothing in the three worlds that I should do, nor is there anything unattained by me which I should attain ; yet do I continue to work.' The lesser folk imitate, however imperfectly, what great men do. Whatever these latter set up as the standard, that the generality of men follow. Hence it is that the *mukta* appears to perform duties which are really no duties to him. The result of whatever he does, does not accrue to him, but redounds to the credit of society.

Such a one is the true man of culture. The *Bhagavad-Gita* calls him the *sthita-prajna* or *gunatita*. He has transcended the triad of *gunas* which constitute the things of the world ; he has become steadfast in consciousness which

is the self. Unlike the feverishly active individual who pursues the latest inducements to pleasure, he does not follow the way of the senses. His sense-organs are withdrawn, even as the limbs of a tortoise are at the approach of danger. He is completely free from wasting desires and dissipating thoughts. The objects of the world have no allurements for him. A piece of gold is on a par with a clod of earth. Pleasure and pain, praise and calumny, friend and foe are equal to him. He has discarded the pluralistic outlook ; and so he is free from passion, fear and anger. He sees the self in all. In him all enjoyments merge themselves, even as the rivers enter the ocean, which though full on all sides remains undisturbed. The *Bhagavad Gita* describes the state of such a one as *Brahmi-sthiti* and *Brahma-nirvana*. It is the fruition of spiritual culture. Attaining it, says the *Gita*, delusion is overcome and one gets firmly established in Brahman.

Sri Krishna's gospel which is an epitome of the Upanishads sets forth in a lucid manner

the essentials of India's conquests in the realm of the Spirit. It is worthy of note that the *Bhagavad-Gita* is not a sectarian scripture. The *Gita-charya* is not interested in the inculcation of any particular cultus. When he speaks of God he refers to Him by the most general name *Isvara*. The Upanishadic doctrine of Brahman as re-taught by the *Gita* is the pivot on which the metaphysic of the Vedanta revolves. Not only the exponents of the orthodox schools but also heterodox writers like the Jainas and the Bauddhas quote the *Gita* with approval. The unique feature about the *Lord's Song* is that it gives the greatest common measure of agreement in spirituality, and traverses the entire gamut of spiritual experience. There is no chord in the human heart which does not respond to the master-touch of the great Artist, Sri Krishna. His *murali*, the *Gita*, will always ravish the souls of men and redeem them from *samsara*. There is no book which has contributed so much as the *Bhagavad-Gita* to the unity of India and to the perfection of her culture.

MESSAGE FOR THE GITA JAYANTI DAY

(15-12-1945)

from

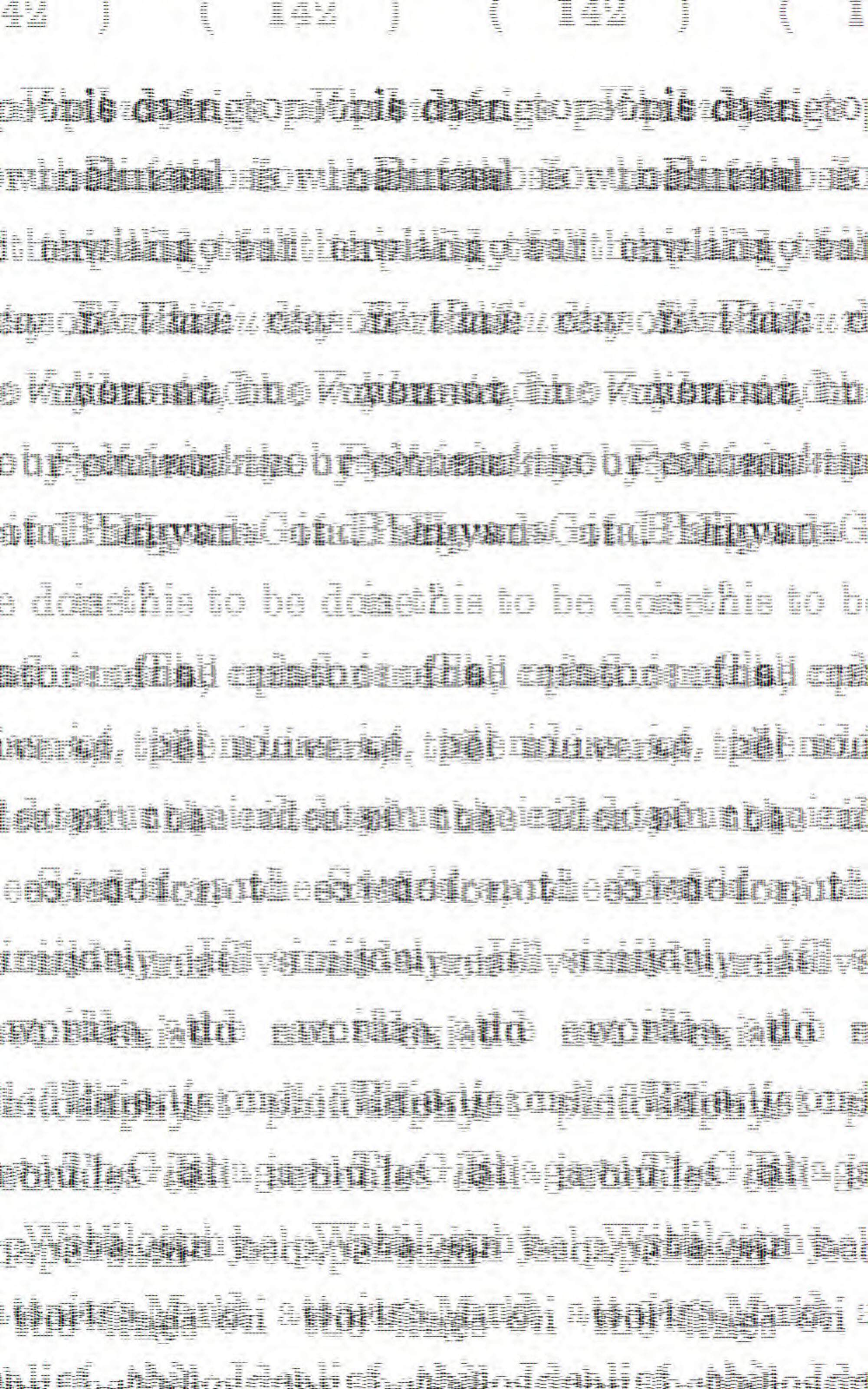
SRI B. V. NARASIMHASWAMY,

President, All-India Sai Samaj, Madras.

Brothren,

Blessed is this day—thrice blessed. It is the first of the *Margasirsa* month. मासानां मार्ग-श्रीबो'रिम says Bhagwan. As Bhagawan is the best and most perfect of all things and persons, this month is the best of all months. And the *Sukla Ekadasi* is the best of all days of this month. In the Maharashtra, death on any *Ekadasi* (especially on this *Ekadasi*) is hailed as the gateway to *Mukti* or Heaven. Sri Sai Baba's leading devotees (like Sri Sai Baba himself) parted from their fleshy sheath on *Ekadasi* days by his grace and are believed thereby to have secured *Sadgati*—a belief well warranted by Bhagaved Gita, Ch. VIII, verses 5 and 6.

This day is styled the *Vaikunta Ekadasi* as



at the very commencement of the Gita. What are you (says the Lord) to dejected Arjuna, dejected at the thought of parting with all your kinsmen and what are these kinsmen ?

नैनं क्षिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापः न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

अच्छेद्योऽयं अदाह्याऽयं अक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यः सर्वगतस्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।

न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥

You (as also any other jivas) are not a body, a perishing fragment of matter wetted, cut, burnt and parched. You are the Imperishable, Universal, Unshakable, permanent Reality. Sri Krishna wanted Arjuna to realise his identity with the Paramatman, because if Arjuna did so, he would be one with *Vaikuntavasi* Krishna. The Gita teachings are milk drawn from the Upanishads. Arjuna is only the calf that was the immediate cause or occasion for starting the flow of milk. After the calf-Arjuna has sucked the milk, there is plenty of milk, a perennial stream of milk flowing through this channel

called the Gita. And the wise man will listen to Sri Krishna's call unto all to come and be filled with this celestial beverage. All that imbibe this supreme Bliss and soak their egos in it thoroughly get lost in that Bliss. Let us welcome this Gita Jayanti as a reminder to us of this call. Let us drown ourselves in this Gita Essence so thoroughly as to forget ourselves completely in it. Let our Parayana and Dhyana of the Gita from this day forward be so thorough and perfect that perfect Laya (यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्राम परमं मम) will be ours ; That we should henceforward be Sat-Chit-Ananda.

GITA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS.

(1945).

ALIGARH.

The Aligarh Branch of the Divine Life Society celebrated the Gita Jayanti in the Hiralal Bareshseni College Hall in an exuberant manner and grand scale. Discourses by Sri Swami Karpatriji Maharaj and Swami Krishna bodh Ashramji were full of soul-elevating instructions imparted by the Song Celestial to men of orient times and of modern age. Dharma was the central topic of the day. A Gita Competition was held amongst student population and suitable prizes were awarded. Many copies of Gita in Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit scripts were distributed free on the occasion. The function came to a close with sweet and melodious Sankirtan and Arati.

ATHOOR.

Athoor was one of the few Branches which closely followed the whole day programme of the

Gita Jayanti Day. More than 40 persons took part in the Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan which was inauguated for the first time on this occasion. Kirtan, Akhanda Gita Swadhyaya, observance of complete fast were some of the prominent features of the day. A member of the Branch promptly responded to the Gita Essay Competition and was recommended for a prize.

FYZABAD.

Under the auspices of the Divine Life Society, Fyzabad, the Gita Jayanti Utsav was celebrated at Ramakrishna Kutir, Civil Lines, on the 15th December, 1945, under the presidency of Rai Bahadur Pandit Ram Saran Misra. The programme included Gita Havan, Gita Pat, Kirtan and Nama Ramayan, Gita Competition, Lectures on Gita, Prize distribution, Arati and distribution of Prasad. Poor feeding was also done on the occasion.

GOLDEN ROCK

The Gita Jayanti day was observed at the local Sivanandashram. There was a good gathering. To bring about the merits of synthe-

tic Yoga, a regular practical Sadhana in prayer, Kirtan, meditation, Gita Pat, etc. was carried on with great success. The Prasad of Lord Krishna was isent to the ailing tuberculosis patients filled with the efficacy of the combined prayer of all.

MEHSANA.

The Gita Jayanti Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm and much delight by the members of the local Branch of the Divine Life Society and the public. Swami Rajeswarananda presided over the function and conducted the day in the most lively manner. Humble and reverential tributes were paid in chorus to Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, one of the day's true Gita expounders.

MADRAS (TRIPLICANE).

Under the auspices of the Triplicane Branch, Gita Jayanti Day was celebrated on a grand scale. Sri. M.A. Narayana Iyengar, M.A., B.L., Retd. Dy. Director of Public Instruction, Mysore, spoke on "Gita & Modern India".

MADRAS (GEORGE TOWN).

Gita Jayanati was celebrated on a grand scale under the presidency of the hon'ble Mr. Justice Kuppuswamy Iyer. There was Gita recitation by boys and girls from several schools of the city and there were many speakers, chief among them being Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri, Dr. T. S. Tirumurthy, Yogi Shyam Maharaj of Vijayasram, Rao Bahadur Krishnamurthy, and Srimati Pattamal. Mr. C. R. Pattabhiraman distributed prizes to successful candidates in the Gita competition. With Arati and distribution of Prasad the function came to a close.

RAJGIR.

Sri Swami Swarupananda, one of the pioneers of the Divine Life Society, who propagates various teachings and ideals of Sri Swami Sivanandji Maharaj, arranged for a grand celebration of the Gita Jayanti Day at Rajgir (Patna) closely following the Society's headquarters programme. Sri 108 Mahant Hansa Deva Muniji Maharaj

and Sjt. Padmaraj Jain of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha delivered elevating discourses on the present-day application of the Universal Gospel. Handsome prizes were awarded to the elocutionists.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, RIKHIKESH.

(Established in 1936)

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The Secretary,
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, RIKHIKESH.
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